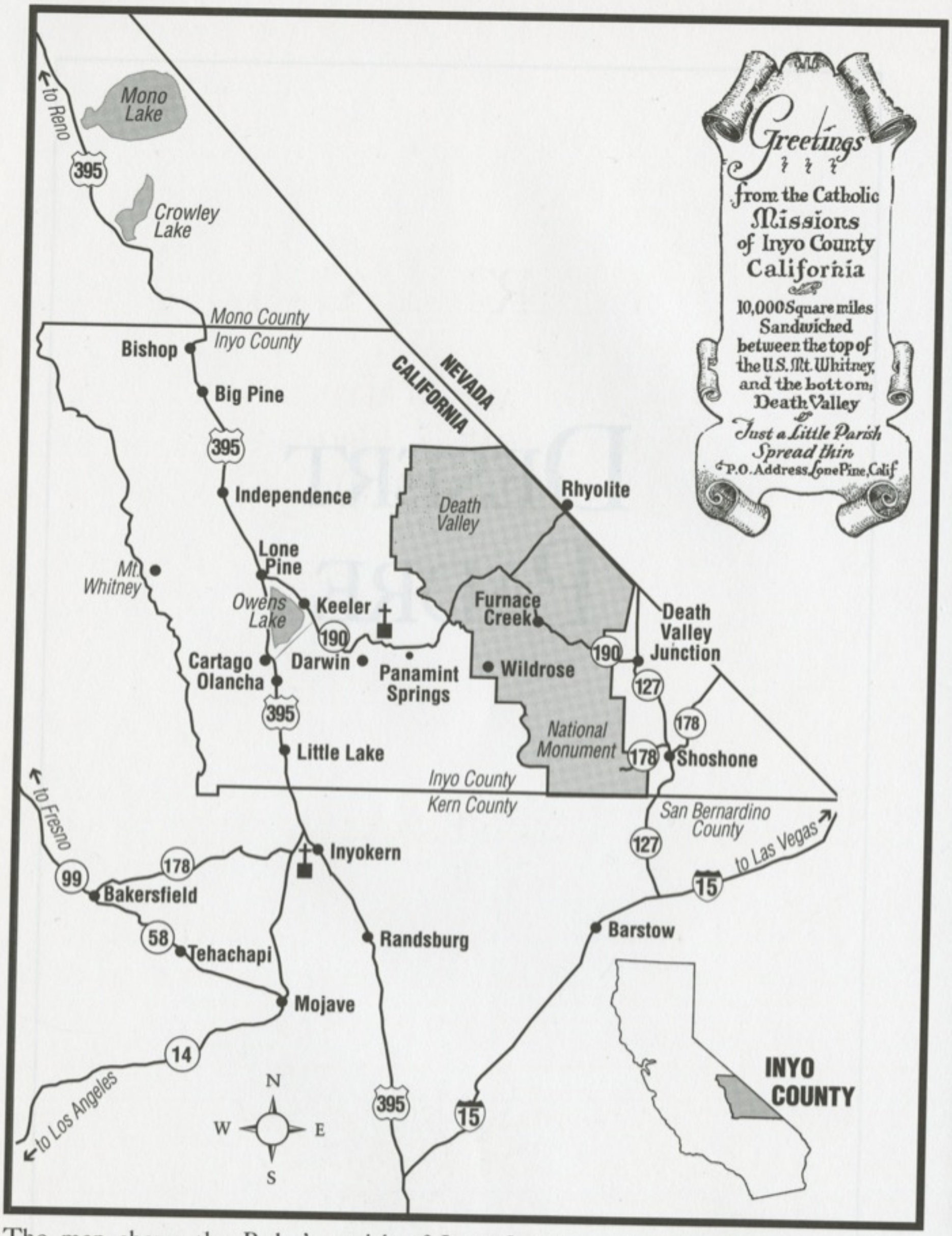
DESERT PADRE

The Life and Writings of Father John J. Crowley 1891-1940

Joan Brooks

DESERT PADRE



The map shows the Padre's parish of Inyo County and surrounding areas. Death Valley's boundaries are those of the National Monument as Father Crowley knew them in the thirties–they have since been expanded in the new National Park (1994). The scroll in the upper right is copied from the parish stationery designed by the Padre. *Map not to scale.*

DESERT PADRE

THE LIFE AND WRITINGS OF FATHER JOHN J. CROWLEY (1891 - 1940)

Joan Brooks

MESQUITE PRESS
Desert Hot Springs
California

© 1997 Mesquite Press

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, database development or by an information storage and retrieval system–except by a reviewer who may quote brief passages in a review to be printed in a magazine or newspaper–without permission in writing from the publisher. For information, please contact Mesquite Press, P.O. Box 1304, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240, (760) 329-7762.

Although the author and publisher have made every effort to ensure the accuracy and completeness of information contained in this book, we assume no responsibility for errors, inaccuracies, omissions, or any inconsistency herein. Any slights of people, places, or organizations are unintentional.

Cover design and printing services provided by About Books, Inc., 425 Cedar Street, POB 1500, Buena Vista, CO 81211, (800) 548-1876.

First printing 1997.

ISBN: 0-9656521-4-9 (paper)

Library of Congress Catalog Card No. 97-70406

Printed in the United States of America.

DESERT PADRE

Some men long for the cities crowds, and some for the paganland,
And some would toil in the wilderness where the heart is allied
with the hand.
One such man came to the choice of roads, and he chose a forbidding field.
His only arms was a friendly heart, and the love of God was his shield.

He dwells where the far-flung Sierra looks down on a land of death,
He knows the chill of the lofty peaks and the heat of the desert's breath.
To mankind in pain, though storm winds howl intrepid he goes to
their side.
Though weary and worn will he bring them hope in whose breasts all
hope has died.

Men call him the Desert Padre, as he carries his message of love;
And he seems to have learned from the silences and the vast
star-decked heavens above.
In his presence men feel only reverence though he speaks with a
common touch;
His praises are free as his reprimands and he never demands too much.

His mountains have taught him a steadiness, his desert has drilled
him in peace;
Sunrises have pictured glories of God and the sunsets, divine surcease.
And we who stand on the outer edge of his all-enveloping love;
May learn just a bit from this desert priest of the strength he draws
from above.

And we'll point to him as the years roll by, when we write with a failing pen;
As one who walked in the steps of Christ, and loved all of his fellow men.
And his life shall stand as a monument by the trails that his feet have trod,
For we know that this padre of desert wastes shall sit close to the throne
of God.

David Bromley, Bishop, California, 1939.

CONTENTS

Foreword 1
Preface 4
Notes to Readers 5

1. ROOTS 7
2. THE YOUNG PASTOR 24
3. FRESNO INTERLUDE 32
4. BACK TO LONE PINE 44
5. SHOW BUSINESS 71
6. ANIMAL KINGDOM 92
7. SHEPHERD OF SOULS 114
8. DEATH VALLEY CHRONICLES 150
9. DESERT LORE 218
10. NATURE'S WONDERS 254
11. DESERT DRIVING 275
12. STORY TELLERS 285
13. INYO BOOSTER 306
14. WEDDING OF THE WATERS 323
15. THE STRONG WARRIOR 336
16. LEGACY 364

Notes 382
Bibliography 386
Acknowledgments 390
Index 392

CONTENTS

FOREWORD

Over five decades have passed since a tragic automobile accident in 1940 brought to an end the noteworthy life of the famous Desert Padre. A recent phone call from Joan Brooks informed me she was researching the life of Father John J. Crowley. She had learned from Frank Crowley and Byron Hansen, nephews of Crowley, that I was his close friend, in fact his protégé. "I think I just struck gold!" she said after I readily answered several questions that had puzzled her. A few more conversations over the phone and I felt highly honored when she invited me, in her words, to "give my readers a brief word picture of the impression the Padre made on you."

I find myself happily reliving and enjoying the factual memorabilia presented by Joan Brook's far-reaching research. Almost miraculously she brings to life for readers of today the stirring activity of the Crowley era. Soon I expect to enter my period of eternity satisfied that the latest comers to this world will have available a story of an extraordinary individual who in time passed our way and left our land more livable and our souls more amenable to the will of our Creator.

I consider September of 1925 the most fortunate month in my life. It was then I first met Father John J. Crowley. The principal of Fresno High School had invited him, a fellow Rotarian, and noted for his sparkling Irish humor, to address the first student assembly of the school year.

Not happy with the possibility of being sermonized we greeted the speaker with an audible groan. To our utter surprise the priest seemed unperturbed. He simply stood at attention before the speaker's stand, gazing at the audience, a widespread grin bathing his rugged countenance. He held the pose for several moments until the perplexed teenagers settled into a puzzled silence. Then, accepting their surrender, the priest slowly emphasized his first words, "that's the best groan I have ever experienced!" A ripple of laughter ensued. The speaker had won a battle. He had no thought of losing the war. "What were you expecting?" he challenged them, quickly adding "a holy Joe?"

The enthusiastic clapping of hands assured him of an attentive youthful audience and he went on to exploit his victory. He offered a simplified explanation, how valuable a sense of humor could be in one's life. He ensured our attention with intermittent stories of humorous incidents that made his own life easier to live. We listened intently for the entire sixty minute period, for

we were hearing an unusually charming story teller. As he finished we thanked him with a standing ovation, a procedure I never saw used by teenagers during my high school years.

Early the following morning I bicycled downtown to the Cathedral rectory. I knocked and the Padre himself opened the door. I gasped. He read my surprise. "What did you expect?" he said, "a housekeeper?"

The heartwarming grin that won me over the day before suffused his face as he gestured me inside. "I wish we could afford one," he mused more solemnly. That was enough to dispel my nervousness. "For a long time I've thought of being a priest!" the words burst out. Unplanned, I added, "a priest like you."

It was his turn to be taken by surprise. After a brief pause, like a physical father he knew he would never be, his hands went to my shoulders. "I shall get to work on that," he said. "Now get going. I don't want you to be late for school!"

He was as good as his word. Within a week I found myself in the Junior Seminary, a fifteen year-old teenager, a student for the priesthood in the newly formed Diocese of Monterey-Fresno.

For the next eleven years I came under his constant, benevolent but strict guidance. I soon realized that listening to him paid rich dividends. I kept gaining added respect for him and subsequently realized his respect for me increased in good measure. He was aptly filling for me the place of the father I had lost in early youth. No matter what my future might be, I wanted to be like him. I will never forget his joy in 1936 when he was present at my ordination. How great would have been his happiness had he lived long enough to see his protégé consecrated a bishop in the diocese he (Crowley) had loved and served so admirably in Fresno and Lone Pine.

The more I and many others came to know this Irish immigrant priest the greater we loved him. It was always the harbinger of pleasant moments when he came around the corner. He presented a pudgy figure, not athletic but hardy, a body structure that was a comfortable looking five foot seven, weighing a hundred and eighty pounds. His countenance was typically Hibernian, rugged and rosy, always displaying a friendly grin which sometimes blossomed into a broad smile and occasional light laugh. He rarely told jokes as such or roared with laughter, but frequently chuckled at a witty or comical saying. His company was always enjoyable for he was given to finding fun in commonplace situations and poking fun at himself. In a crowd he became a figure bigger than life. Much of his success with the politically powerful City of Los Angeles Council and its formidable Department of Water and Power came about when he upset icy meetings with a mirth provoking observation or sharply witty answer. His quick retort always brought at least a momentary pause into the grimmest proceedings and an involuntary grin to his opponents. The happy pause seemed to open the way to better understanding which in the long run brought great success to California's desert people.

Exteriorly the Padre seemed to be a very cheerful, lighthearted, out-going person, but we who knew him also experienced another side. He could be introspective and preoccupied, very serious, very exacting, meticulous in regard to the smallest detail. I found him exasperating on the occasion of our climb to the top of Mt. Whitney so that he could celebrate a dedication Mass for the first time on the highest point in the United States overlooking the lowest point Death Valley, both in his parish of Lone Pine. We had to pack every accouterment that would be used in an ordinary weekday Mass in a church. "No problem," the Padre insisted, unwilling to lighten the load we had to carry. "'Red,' my favorite pack mule will be with us." Clearly disgruntled, "Red" had not the slightest interest in climbing Mt. Whitney even over the least arduous, well-built western trail. A few moderate but well-aimed whacks to his broad slats finally persuaded him to be the first "Ship of the Desert" to attend a Mass on the nation's highest peak.

It was clearly evident to those who knew him, that the Padre was first and foremost a man of God. Likewise they knew him to be a man of the people. He was heard to warn that unless he worked to enhance their physical prosperity he would be less successful in bettering their souls. In the course of his ministry he walked forcefully among those who had been blessed with the goods of this world. He conversed with those who had reached the pinnacle of success in government, in business, in the professions. Yet he also walked among and conversed with the poor and uneducated. He was people-oriented and never lacked the common touch.

Few in number are those who were privileged to hear the Padre's spoken word. Who of us in our lifetime will forget the solace and warmth his words brought to us? Not the Friday night Holy Hour listeners who crowded St. John's Cathedral in Fresno for his weekly depiction of the life of Christ, not the dozen desert dwellers uplifted in heart by his requiem at the burial of a lone gold miner, not his Lone Pine parishioners who appreciated his pithy Sunday sermons, not the great and mighty who on special occasions were stirred by his eloquent words. Over the years only their demise has extinguished the memory of his spoken thought in the minds of his followers. As his life story seemed fated to slip into oblivion, Joan Brooks' intriguingly readable biography of one of the California desert land's most dominant figures of the twentieth century brings him back to life and into the receptive hearts of readers who will people the twenty first!

Most Rev. Harry A. Clinch, D.D.
Retired Bishop of Monterey, California

PREFACE

In July of 1994 I pulled out the map to plan a trip to California's Eastern Sierra from Desert Hot Springs and was choosing places to visit along the way. A certain name kept catching my attention-Father Crowley monument on Highway 14, Crowley Lake farther up Highway 395, and to the east on the road to Death Valley was Father Crowley Vista Point. I became more intrigued when I stopped at the Eastern California Museum in Independence and found that Irving Stone had written about Father Crowley in the May 1944 issue of the *Saturday Evening Post.*

When I returned home I began investigating. I obtained a copy of the article by Irving Stone and then found another account in the October 1947 issue of *Desert* Magazine. From there on, I knew I had to find out more. I was hooked. I had thought perhaps of writing a short profile for a magazine article and began doing some preliminary research. I met Frank Crowley, a nephew of Father Crowley and some older parishioners at the Santa Rosa Church's 75th anniversary in Lone Pine in the fall of '94. I saw a few copies of columns he had written called "Sage and Tumbleweed." I could see that here was a treasure trove. I knew that I wanted to do more than just an article, and that Father Crowley's story and his writings needed to reach a wider audience. I know that others have had the same curiosity as I about the many references to Father Crowley. He was known as "The Desert Padre" and people in Owens Valley, Death Valley and the Indian Wells Valley recall his time with them or have heard stories about him.

As I got to know the Padre better, I realized how difficult it was to find much that was really personal. One must arrive at his inmost thoughts and motives by reading between the lines of his writings, noting his own actions and reading comments by those who knew him.

Here was a man who embodied to a "T" the note in his Holy Cross College (Worcester, Mass) Yearbook, the "Purple Patcher," class of 1915. Under the heading of "Jack" was a photo of a serious looking young man, followed by a summary of his activity at Holy Cross. The last paragraph reads: "Memory shall bring John back as one full of wit and humor, always ready with a funny saying or joke. We shall recall him as an earnest and persistent student, as a true friend with all the requisites of a real man."[1]

This is the story of this "real man."

NOTES TO READERS:

When reading the "Sage and Tumbleweed" columns, first published in the Monterey-Fresno Catholic diocesan newspaper, *The Central California Register*, the reader must remember that Inyokel and Father Crowley were one and the same–that if Inyokel says "I accompanied the Padre to" it means the Padre went alone. He wrote about 200 columns over a period of about five and a half years from August 1934 to March 1940, so many had to be omitted from this book. The reader can identify the "Sage and Tumbleweed" columns as they are dated, indented from the rest of the text, and in smaller print.

Where necessary I have used brackets [ ] to clarify a word or reference in a quotation. Parentheses ( ) are those used by Father Crowley or for other quotations or explanations.

The years from 1929 to 1940 were depression years and any time money is mentioned one can multiply the amount by ten or fifteen to obtain the purchasing power of today. For example, a $1.00 donation would be the equivalent of a $10 or $15 donation in today's money.

Much of what Inyokel wrote was based on his own cursory reading or tales told him by prospectors and other old-timers. He did not have time to fully research the data or verify the facts. What he reported was local knowledge and oral tradition available at that time. Death Valley had become a National Monument in 1933 and was still in its native condition when roads were more primitive than they are today. The reader may wish to consult the Bibliography at the back of the book to learn more of the history he touched upon so lightly.

When the *Register* is mentioned, he was referring to the *Central California Register*; the Catholic newspaper for the Monterey-Fresno diocese, not to be confused with the *Inyo Register* published by Will Chalfant in the town of Bishop.

I am sure that other readers out there have stories about the Desert Padre, or may want to make corrections on the text. If you'd like to share them with me, I can put them in a revised edition at a future time. Just write me at: Mesquite Press, P.O. Box 1304, Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240, or call me at 760-329-7762.

1

ROOTS

The beautiful Killarney Lakes area in County Kerry, Ireland was the birthplace of John J. Crowley. He was born on December 8, 1891, the feast of the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary in the Roman Catholic calendar.

His father was Michael Crowley and his mother was Nora Lyne Crowley. It is well to point out here that the name Crowley derives from the old Gaelic and means "strong warrior." His brother George later wrote: "He came in answer to a novena of his mother, who had lost her first three children, and we have joked since about her overdoing it a bit for she was rewarded with a child for each day of the novena, nine in a row." [2]

In Killarney, John attended the private Catholic School of the Presentation Brothers from 1897 to 1903. His parents were well-to-do as they owned the Park Place Hotel and the Palace Hotel on the Lakes of Killarney, the boats, all the carts, coaches, horse-drawn carriages and all other means of transportation for visitors in the Killarney lakes and fells. The hotel had excursions from Killarney up to the Gap of Dunloe. These tours were by horse-drawn carriages over steep, winding roads that were rock-bound and rutted in many places.

When a tourist was killed in a horse-carriage accident on one of the rough roads, the family sued the Crowleys. There was no insurance and the Crowleys were forced to sell their hotel and properties. The family was without means of support but was probably helped by relatives of Nora Crowley, the Lyne family, who were numerous and generally prosperous cattlemen and farmers. Michael Crowley emigrated to the United States and soon arranged for the rest of the family to join him in Worcester, Massachusetts in 1903.

On the ship coming over, Nora Crowley, who thought they would be rich in America, went through the children's clothes. Under the assumption that anything old and worn would not be needed, Nora tossed them overboard. A rude awakening came when she found out that America was very different than she had dreamed.

8 Desert Padre

Jack, as he was known then, was only eleven when he came to the United States, but the images of the Emerald Isle and its history would linger on in his memory. When musing on the theme of bridges many years later, he wrote: "and the ancient arch that covers, as you would a fledgling with your cupped hand, the meeting of the waters in the Lakes of Killarney."[3] Later he commented: "the writer's eye was trained to discern beauty by Killarney's lakes and fells."[4]

Killarney is described as the greenest part of the Emerald Isle. What a contrast with his desert parish. Although he never mentioned it, one wonders if this contrast ever occurred to him. In one of his poems published in the *Holy Cross Purple*, the monthly magazine of Holy Cross College, he wrote with touching nostalgia about a stone given to him from Muckross Abbey. Muckross Abbey was built in the 1400s and houses the tombs of the poets of Kerry and some of the Lyne family's ancestors. John Crowley wrote:

Ah me, what a gift from old Ireland,
A treasure no riches could own,
A gem from the crown of my sireland
From Muckross, a moss-covered stone.

Sure, touching it sets my heart flying
Across the great wide-rolling main,
To the spot where the dear ones are lying
By the abbey, I see it again.

The walls that old time slow is crumbling
To dust, and the windows that stare
With their great sightless eyes at the tumbling
Grim cloister, surrounding the square.

The yew tree, for sustenance needing
Red blood as the sap in its veins,
A pin-prick will set it to bleeding
Till naught but the dry bark remains.

The gaunt branches o'er ruins clearing
Stretch out to the stars and the moon
And in at each orifice peering
They murmur a mystical tune.

They lisp of the monks who once pattered
The cloister, who tilled the black earth,
Of Henry, whose greediness scattered
Them far from the land of their birth

And the ivy, whose tender green fingers
Creep o'er every time-hallowed stone,
On wall and on window long lingers
For the ivy calls Muckross its own.

Not a sound save the sad wind a-weeping
O'er the dear ones beneath that green pall,
Not a movement to wake those a-sleeping
Save the moonbeams that stream over all.

You look for a brown form a-kneeling
Behind a dark pillar in prayer,
You listen to hear a bell pealing
Its joy on the dolorous air.

But no, there is naught there but sorrow,
There is nothing but silence and peace,
Here are none who would claim a tomorrow
From time they have gained a release.

Ah me, what a gift from old Ireland,
A treasure no riches could own,
A gem from the crown of my sireland,
From Muckross, a moss-covered stone.[5]

The Crowley family consisted of John, his three brothers, Frank, Fred and George and four sisters, Nora, May, Alice and Pauline. Another sister was born shortly after her father's death, but died 22 months later.

In Worcester where the now poverty-stricken family was living, finding work was not easy. "No Irish Need Apply" was a common sign seen in most work establishments in the early 1900s. Times were rough, as his brother George later reported in his memoir:

"My father, though in many ways a genius, was not the best provider in the world—and soon God took him to Himself, leaving Nora Crowley alone, with her large brood to provide for. The going was rough and the pickings

were scanty, but God was good. The elder children, more especially Jack, put their hands to most everything, from peddling peanuts and popcorn and candy on the trains, to being busboys and dishwashers at the large seaside hotels in the summertime. In those days before the unions were properly organized, they worked long hours, and had little leisure."[6]

Michael Crowley died of throat cancer in 1909 and so Nora Crowley as a young widow had eight children to support. John, being the eldest, had to help as did the other children as they grew up.

Alice and Pauline who were very close told the story in later years of their childhood: "While Pauline was very young, the doctor advised her mother to send the delicate child to another climate to escape the rigors of the New England weather. Accompanied by her sister Alice, two years her senior, Pauline left for Killarney and the care of relatives there. Pauline always referred to Alice as her 'other half.'

"The stay of the Crowley girls in Ireland was prolonged for five and a half years, [from 1914 to 1919]. While in Killarney they went to school to the Sisters of Mercy. Although they enjoyed the loving attentions of their relatives, the two young exiles longed to be reunited with their family in the United States. World War I made it impossible for them to return, as the Atlantic was the arena of continual battles and crossing was too dangerous to attempt. Many years later Pauline recounted a poignant scene that led to the girls' return to America. Pauline and Alice were on a train from Killarney, going to another town to participate in a program of step-dancing, which they dearly loved and at which they were gifted. They noticed on the station platform a woman with a little boy. By their clothing the two were judged to be Americans. The girls on the train thought the woman looked familiar, very much like their mother. After looking more closely, they exclaimed, 'It is Mother,' as their train pulled away from the station, away from their desired reunion. Thanks to a kindly station master the two girls were placed in a return train back to Killarney and the embrace of their mother."[7]

During their stay, John sent a Christmas card to his two sisters in Ireland with a poem entitled: "My Two Colleens" which was published in *The Optimist*. The names were changed to fit the verse form:

> Red roses bloom in Bridie's cheeks, her lips are like the cherry,
> Her dimples–ah, the likes of them were never seen in Kerry.
> And Bridie is sweet keeper of my heart, she owns it wholly,
> Except perhaps the half of it, the half belongs to Dolly!

O Dolly's eyes are mountain lakes, A fairy's is her motion;
Her laugh's still floating through my dreams,
And she's across the ocean.
But whist! she says I'm more to her than all the world beside is–
In troth she's got me, heart and soul, Except the half that's Bridie's.

'Tis sweeter far to love like this, Deciding is but folly,
And so I send a Christmas card to Bridie,–and to Dolly!
You think me a deceiving rogue, Sure each knows I love the other–
My colleens fair are sisters small and I–am their big brother.[8]

In Worcester Nora ran a boarding house in their home on 68 Portland St. and depended on active participation of family members for all the tasks needed for both family and business. John has one lively story published in the *Holy Cross Purple* that is set in a boarding house with a row house type of construction. His mother's business may have provided the inspiration for the story.

Since John was the eldest, he assumed the role of "man of the house"(his sister Alice later called him "the Headlight") and learned responsibility that served him well in his later career. Very little is known of his boyhood days, but perhaps an insight into his boy's world may be surmised from a short story he wrote in the *Holy Cross Purple* in 1912. It tells of a Greek storekeeper, named John who sold fruit, candy, novelties, tobacco and even had a shoeshine stand:

"In the showcases may be found everything that delights the soul of a small boy. Here are great, fat, luscious chocolates, worth a whole week's savings. There are great cheek-swelling peppermint balls for the lad who wants long, lasting enjoyment. In this corner, red, yellow and green tops lie scattered, while here and there a shiny baseball lurks, awaiting the call of a youthful prodigy of the diamond. Many a childish nose has flattened itself against the sides of this case, and many pairs of childish eyes have gloated in delightful anticipation of the contents.

"In still another case are many boxes of dusky cigars, and Egyptian cigarettes, and meerschaum pipes, but they are not for us. These luxuries were for fellows in long pants, like Tom Lane, who could puff with full parental sanction. At one side are assorted pocketknives, glistening in eternal temptation, flanked by pens and pencils, dread symbols of school.

"... Verily, indeed, this store of John's was 'paradise enow' for us in the long winter evenings."[9]

Was one of those noses flattened against the glass case young John's? Perhaps. He was always a fun-loving person and enjoyed the small pleasures of life. There were a few holiday trips to the nearby Worcester Lake Quinsigamond where the children went swimming and boating. Baseball games were common and John put on plays with his siblings as the actors.

Frank and John were of very different dispositions. Frank did not have the sometimes outrageous sense of humor that John had. Once the two were reading gravestones in a New England churchyard. John noticed two adjacent head stones, CASH was engraved on one and CARRIE was on the next one. John made some typical remark about "taking it with you." This remark was not much appreciated by Frank, but was definitely typical of John. John was also much freer about other people's property, whereas Frank made a special point of privacy of ownership and personal space. He took special offense when John opened and read his mail. This caused a brief period of dissonance between the two brothers. One of Frank's sons remembered that "John brought out the best in Daddy." However, even with three clerics in the family, Frank complained that when they visited him in the East his white shirts were borrowed without his permission. His son writes: "One more issue which my father employed to comment on his family's irresponsible life view, was the gravestone in Worcester for the grave of his parents and his sister Agnes. He apparently had agreed to attend to the selection and placement of the stone with the understanding that the cost would be shared. The family members never came through with their share and he felt that there was no awareness or concern about the burden that this placed on a young growing family. This contrasts strongly with my own experience with them after traveling cross country with eight children in a trailer. When we arrived in California we were treated like royalty. The bonds established at that time brought us to this state[California] for our retirement."[10] That Frank thought highly of his older brother is shown in later years, when as Dean of the School of Education at Fordham he inscribed in his book, *The High School Principal*, these words: "To my brother Jack, the hero of my boyhood, and still my highest ideal of militant Christian manhood."[11]

From 1903 to 1907 John attended public schools in Worcester and later the English School, a high school for boys who planned on going to college. In 1910 he entered Clark College in Worcester to study journalism, and he transferred to Holy Cross College in Worcester in 1911.

The story of his student days and his vocation to the priesthood are

related in the Catholic weekly, *America* in an unsigned article entitled: "Autobiography of a Student's Soul"

"(The following letter was written in response to the query of a priest and dear friend, Father M___, and was intended for his eyes only. The writer's consent to publish it was, for manifest reasons, given reluctantly–a heart-story is not easy to make public–and only on the plea that it might serve its little in God's interests.)

"Reverend Dear Father:

"How long is it since you wrote me? It seems like an age, but yet I dare say it is in reality scarce a month. I have mislaid your letter in my travels, but I remember quite distinctly that you asked me very graciously about myself. Because of your right, both as friend and priest, I am tempted to disclose many things that even those very near to me do not know. It may be no news to you that I intend to study for the priesthood. But I must begin from the beginning, Father, if you are to judge fully the sincerity of my vocation.

"When I was a youngster in Ireland, the oldest boy in the family, I was destined for the Church, as is the custom in that God-loving country. As I grew a little older, however, my father, himself at one time an altar-boy, but who, God rest him, in his later years was rather lax in attending to his duties, came to exert a great influence on my life. He never openly discouraged me, I was only eight or nine anyway, but his influence was strong enough to turn my thoughts to a more worldly career. He had been a teacher before entering the hotel business, and it was his hobby personally to superintend my education, making a specialty of lessons in English. He took me on all his business trips. He was like a big brother in everything. What wonder is it that he unconsciously exercised a powerful influence over my future? He filled me with a zeal for worldly glory, for fame and renown. Later, when the crash that ruined us came, indirectly through the infidelity of a relative, directly through this same loftiness and slighting of all outside himself, my father continued to teach me to be above those around me, to become great, renowned, esteemed. To this ambition revenge was now added. "We'll show them yet, boy. You'll come back some day and crush them." These were his words when we left for America, some ten years ago. And I, hearing this dinned into my ears, morning, noon and night, naturally became infected with this same spirit of revenge and with these worldly ambitions.

"We did not fare well here, not for five or six years. A little while before my father died we acquired a house, and since then we have

been climbing the ladder. In this new country, with the task of supporting a young family on his hands, my father found little time for recriminations, and my advancing years brought me more and more out of that intimate acquaintance of childhood days. But the harm had been done, and when I was placed in the public school here, after spending my young years under the protecting wings of the Brothers of the Presentation, all thought of my vocation for the priesthood vanished. Not that I gave it a thought at the time, but in retrospect I see that this was one of the deciding steps in my going astray from the true path.

"You probably can guess the rest. I soon contracted that terrible faith-sapping disease so prevalent in all non-sectarian and in many coeducational institutions, indifferentism. I was not bad. I recall no crimes committed during that period, but, God forgive me, I was indifferent. I went to Communion once a month in a mechanical fashion. I listened to heretical doctrines with what I was pleased to call an unusual broadmindedness for a Catholic. I mingled freely with Protestant and Jew and despised the vulgar Irish. Oh, I basked in the sunshine of their admiration, and gurgled with glee in their approbation of my high school prowess. Yes, I tried at one time to join the high school Y.M.C.A. club. *Mea maxima culpa.*

"Naturally, my studies were shaped for any end but that of the priesthood. My father wanted me to go to a school of technology from which were graduated men who had won fame and fortune. I took a mechanical course for three years, but without success. I starred only in English. At the close of the third year I switched to a commercial course, determining to take up journalism, thus putting my natural taste for writing to good advantage. Of course, at graduation a Catholic college was not to be thought of. [Clark] College was the nearest, the cheapest, and offered me apparently everything I needed in my new calling. (I forgot to mention that father died at the end of my third year in great agony but with peace of mind and united with God). To [Clark] College I went, fully determined now to be a journalist. I saw that I needed a little Latin and Greek if only for the etymology of English. I had to take French because languages were required in Freshman. Likewise a science was required, so I took biology. I took Current History because history was required.

"This college was like the public school with the last trace of Catholicity eliminated. It was bleak. At first I did not mind it. I took it as a matter of course. But when in biology I was forced to swallow the most revolting theories of evolution, which my too long dormant Catholicity

could not stomach, I began to feel a vague unrest. The glamour of high school social days was gone. Here was Materialism in all its bare, cold reality.

"In current history each man in the class was supposed to write a thesis at midyear on some subject relating to the present condition of Mohammedan countries. I wrote about the difficulty of converting the followers of Islam, from a Protestant viewpoint, for I used Protestant reference material. The professor looked it over and asked, "Why didn't you write about Catholic missions?" Oh, Father, if I could only forget the shame of that moment. I muttered something and went out.

"In French we studied the literature of the seventeenth century, that of Pascal, Descartes, Corneille, Racine, etc. You recall Pascal and his *Lettres d'un Provincial*, and his defence of the Jansenists and Port Royale. Well, it came up in class, and we devoted considerable time to the study of the Jesuits' definition of grace and free will, the Jansenists' definition and the Thomists' definition. I was ignorant of the true doctrine, and being the most wide awake Catholic in the class, which is saying very little for the rest, I was made the source of information by the professor, who strove to 'pump' me continually about the present-day Catholic belief, and so on: as there was only one thing to do, read, I read. I read till the eyes popped out of my head with surprise. I read in the *Catholic Encyclopedia* till my heart was sore. I, as some convert has said, discovered the Catholic Faith. Since childhood I had been a Catholic implicitly, not knowing why, not caring. Now I began to know why. I was fascinated. I read all the controversial literature I could find. I became a rabid and zealous advocate of the true doctrine in the class discussion. I told the professor things that made him sit up. Yet my heart was sore. I did not fully realize it, but I was becoming nauseated with my environment.

"In the strangest way possible I stumbled across Catholic books and Catholic customs. I began to conduct a series of long retreats with myself. I essayed a mental stock-taking. What could I do? What was I best fitted for? Whither did my present course lead? What did the sum total of everything that I had learned and was naturally able to do, fit me for?

"It came one morning, a Sunday morning, about six o'clock, as I was carrying my papers around my route. I had been revolving these questions over and over in my mind for a month, and on this particular morning I had been unusually busy in thinking. I came to where two streets crossed. Not a soul was in sight at that early hour.

"'What, O Lord, am I fitted for?' was running in my mind. Like a bolt

out of a clear sky, after eight years of not even daring to think of such an idea came the answer: 'A priest.' It flashed into my mind on the instant, God knows from where, and I will confess it staggered me. I struggled against it as they say Pius X did when he was elected Pope. I tried to advance arguments against this terrible step, but I lost at every point. Everything led to this. I had never learned to dance, I never smoked, never drank, never swore. Why? My father had brought me up that way, that's all; unconsciously helping to shape my career. I was a good speaker, that is, I had the knack of putting words together so that they lent themselves to make the maximum of impression with the minimum of oratorical effort. I had studied in so many lines and branches and had read so widely that I had acquired a fund of general information unusual in a boy of my age. In spite of all my youthful training I felt a growing sense of service, of *noblesse oblige.* I was acquiring an education, to what use was I going to put it? A selfish one? Thanks to the teachings of my English professor in high school, a Holy Cross man, who always told his pupils to choose that calling in which they could furnish the greatest service and not that in which they might gain the greatest pecuniary or worldly reward, I felt that I must work for the rest of humanity. But you will notice that in these few qualifications there was one important thing apparently lacking. That was the faith, the perseverance, the self-restraint necessary for such a holy calling. That was why I fought against this apparent folly. And that too, was why I prayed. Yes, I prayed fervently for the first time in many years. I prayed to the Sacred Heart and to Our Lady of Perpetual Help. I asked not for strength, but for light. If it was God's will that I should be a priest I knew that God would give me the strength.Therefore I prayed to find out if it was indeed God's will.

"And in the meantime, feeling at last that no matter what was my final choice, I could not stay at [Clark] College after that year, I began casting about. I felt that the college was closed to me, because I had no Latin and less Greek. I was a member of the A.O.H. [Ancient Order of Hibernians] and I had heard of the scholarships of that Order in the Catholic University [Washington, D.C.]. I wrote the bursar and he told me when and where I could take the examination. I felt sure I could win a scholarship, but it would take me away from home, something I could not do at that time. For since father's death I had taken his place in a way for my little brothers and sisters. Mother was very busy with her work; some one must look after the heavy labor about the house and superintend the training of the children. Unconsciously I assumed the

burden, and I did not realize how much this helped to soften my heart and to realize the truth of His words: 'Suffer the little ones to come unto me, for of such is the Kingdom of Heaven,' until some time afterward, when my sister, born two months after my father's death, and the idol of my heart, died in her second year. It tore the last vestige of pride and worldly love out of my heart, and I swore by her little corpse that never again should I set up false gods before me. But previous to this, in the early spring, I was still in some doubt. I told no one of my thoughts, although my mother told me afterwards that she had strongly suspected for some time that my thoughts were turning toward the Church.

"Then came the second decisive step. As I have said, I felt that [Holy Cross] College was closed to me. I felt that it would not be fair to mother and the children to go away to Washington and I knew that I could not and should not stay longer at [Clark] College. I never gave up praying, and one afternoon, during a lull in one of the very discussions in the French class that had started me thinking, I prayed for light. It was a warm afternoon, and with the words of the prayer on my lips I glanced through the open window. And about a half mile away, above the trees, glittering like burnished gold in the setting sun, stood out the cross on _____Hall, [Holy Cross] College. I knew not what cross it was at the time, but I knew it was *the cross*, and standing out so unmistakably that even a madman could see that I had received my answer.

"I hesitated no longer. Next day, facing what I believed to be an insurmountable obstacle, I applied to the vice-president for admission to [Holy Cross] College. He received me with open arms. I wish I could describe to you my joy at that moment. I felt like a convert to the Faith. Since my entrance to the college, and you can guess my mother's joy upon that occasion, my course has been that of a gradual spiritual development.

"Then came another period of indecision, as to what I should do– enter a religious order or join the secular priesthood. The latter seems inevitable at present, because of the family circumstances, but as Father _____ and Father _____ told me, I shall leave it in the hands of God. At present I am under the tutelage of Bishop Conaty of Monterey and Los Angeles, and will probably go to him unless our circumstances change.

"I am in a hurry, Father, but I have tried to tell you enough to show you that I am sincere in my determination. I hope I may see you this summer, but if not, help me, Father, and pray for me. Very sincerely."[12]

The Jesuits lowered the tuition for John and also for Frank who fol-

lowed him to Holy Cross a year later. John was a student at Holy Cross College from 1911 to 1915 when he graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree.

The yearbook lists him as editor of the campus magazine, *Holy Cross Purple,* for his first three years, and as editor-in-chief in his senior year. He was Prefect of the Sodality in his senior year; speaker in his sophomore year at the annual banquet and principal speaker at Governor Walsh's reception in 1915. His literary talent is evident in the numerous short stories, essays, editorials and poems he contributed to the *Holy Cross Purple.* He did not hesitate to take up the gauntlet against the prestigious *Nassau Literary Magazine* from Princeton University. In caustic prose he boldly defended his Church's stand for humanity and service against the Princeton critics.

Speaking about the yearbook, *The Purple Patcher,* and the hardships for the students of modest means, he railed in an editorial in the *Holy Cross Purple* against what he termed "Pictures, Patchers and Piffle"and "numerous expensive photos, plush yearbooks." He suggested: "make the book more like a book and less like a sofa pillow" and as far as multiple copies–"who wants three Patchers?"[13] In spite of his criticism of *The Patcher*, the editors accorded him a paragraph in the 1915 issue which reads:

"In having as its Editor-in-Chief Mr. John J. Crowley, *The Purple* is singularly fortunate, for here is a gentleman who, besides possessing rare talent as an essayist, short story writer and poet, is a past master of diplomacy, an asset of inestimable value to one whose duties bring him into intimate contact with his fellow students. As a humorist he stands pre-eminent in the world of college journalism, for his dialect poems, under the caption, "Musings of Seumas," have delighted not only every reader of *The Purple*, but they have been widely copied by magazines and daily papers. As an exponent of the short story, this versatile litterateur has won well-merited praise, while his ability as an essayist is best attested to by the fact that he secured first prize in *The Purple* essay contest for the collegiate year 1913-1914. The members of the present board of editors have every reason to felicitate themselves on having this gentleman as their leader, while prospective contributors to the college monthly would do well to peruse the contributions of its present Editor-in-Chief."[14]

For the final issue of *The Purple* he was allowed to share the editorial page with his successor and wrote: "Have we accomplished anything this year? Is *The Purple* any nearer a definite goal than it was when we

were given the helm? The questions are ours, the answer–yours. Suffice it to state what we have aimed to accomplish. We strove for–popularity! Pray do not misunderstand,–we mean popularity for the magazine. We felt that a college monthly should be one of the most noteworthy if not the most noteworthy institution a college possesses. We felt that *The Purple* was not only not circulated enough, but that it was our primary aim, for a magazine is a growth, and an administration does well to accomplish one reform.

"Our methods? Well, perhaps they seemed far-fetched, high-handed–yea, even bizarre. We played upon the emotions of our readers, upon their indignation, their approbation, their curiosity, their pride. We believed, and we have not altered our opinion since putting it into practice, that every time a man thought or mentioned *Purple*, favorably or unfavorably, he was unconsciously advertising the magazine. Some of our most enthusiastic readers have been the bitterest opponents of our editorial statements. They read, and they wrote in their ire, and we published their irate offerings with joy, and others read with ire and joy. And thus the snowball becomes an avalanche.

"Not that we were insincere in our editorial utterances. We meant them, every word. But instead of uttering equally sincere tirades against prohibition or the Mexican muddle, we confined our invectives to certain college activities. And there, as history has proved, was the rub. For now, modesty notwithstanding, *The Purple* is read."[15] Today's magazine consultants or critics could not have done better in expressing the qualities of a good magazine–it sticks to its focus and it is read!

The editor who followed him, Joseph T. Higgins, wrote in the same issue: "To John J. Crowley, Editor-in-Chief Emeritus, whose unselfish labors, unstinted zeal, and fearless eloquent editorials have not only raised the literary standing and popularity of *The Purple* to an enviable plane, but have also won the respect and admiration of its readers. His rare and subtle pen has for four long years produced stories, poetry and essays so uniformly excellent that he stands forth one of the most versatile writers that *The Purple* has ever had."[16]

His Irish heritage sometimes came to the fore in his rich and romantic imagination. We get a glimpse of this in a lyrical poem written in his college years entitled "Frost Fairies":

All night the dismal driven rain
Beat restlessly
As fingers tapping 'gainst the pane.
And oft did fretful wind complain

Most mournfully.

Methought, ere many-wiled sleep
Encompassed me,
Tonight the elves do prance and leap,
Through storied vale, o'er fabled steep
Most merrily.

The morn, from out my casement wide
I viewed entranced,
From glistening trees, and white hillside,
From runnels gemmed, and pendants pied,
Gay sunbeams glanced.

For, o'er the sad earth, through the night
By tempest torn,
The elves had labored, till all bright
And shimmering she rose bedight
On Easter morn![17]

John was a day-student so was also involved in off-campus activities such as his St. Paul's parish Holy Name Society and the Ancient Order of Hibernians, a group which promoted Irish culture and causes. He was a better-than-average athlete, but had little time to indulge in sports. According to his yearbook, "he formed a lasting friendship with 'Hennie' Manning and 'Ducky' Walsh and was usually accompanied by them to and from school. What happened during these daily walks is a cause of much laughter to these three pals."[18]

John and his brother Frank worked at various jobs during their college years. John once worked as a clerk in a hotel in the Adirondacks during his summer vacation–a step up from the busboy and dishwasher of his earlier years. He and Frank both worked in the circulation room of the *Worcester Telegram*. John's mother opened a food stand in the summers at Revere Beach, Massachusetts and John helped her with whatever was needed. Frank told his sons later of the clear loss of status and the severe drop in the quality of life which the family experienced in moving from Ireland to start a new life in the United States. In Ireland they had servants, silver service, fine linens and well prepared food. In America they were food servers! Frank graduated from Holy Cross in 1916, taught for a year and then joined the Army when the United States became involved in World War I.

While at Holy Cross, John heard Bishop Thomas J. Conaty speak of his diocese in the Monterey-Los Angeles area and the dire need for priests in the West. He wrote to Bishop Conaty and was referred to Father William Foley in Worcester. He obtained the required letters from priests who could recommend him for ordination for the Monterey-Los Angeles diocese. His former Prefect of Studies, Father J.N. Dinand, S.J. at Holy Cross wrote a glowing letter to Bishop Conaty describing him as "one of the best young men Holy Cross has reared in recent years ... he deserved fullest confidence and affection ... possessed of excellent ability both as a student and writer, he has the spirit of indefatigable labor with a serious appreciation of honor and responsibility...and can predict for him with assurance a brilliant future of service both for God and man... and to your care she (Holy Cross) entrusts one of her most loyal and devoted sons."[19]

Father Foley, a priest who knew John well in Worcester, wrote that he was a "clean cut bright young fellow, up to date in every respect. While born in Ireland, there is nothing Irish about him as he came here while a child. He has been a most popular student at Holy Cross and as editor-in-chief of *The Purple* gave that paper the best name and standing that it ever had."[20] The reference to his Irish heritage reflects some of the attitudes of the time.

John entered the old St. Mary's Seminary in Baltimore, Maryland in 1915. Of those days there is only a glimpse as no seminary monthly magazine or yearbook existed in which he could express his talents in writing. After his death, his obituary in the seminary magazine in April 1940 reads: "Some of us remembered him as a seminarian standing up near the linen screen which reflected pictures in the Prayer Hall at Old St. Mary's, and telling of the beauties of Father Boone's camp in the Adirondacks and the charms of vacation there. He was a poet; Father Boone could not have chosen a better man in generations of seminarian campers to sing the beauties of Long Lake. He preserved the manuscripts for other campers to read in like circumstances. But although he was a poet, and wrote prose delightfully, there was not a lowlier seminarian in the House. He seemed utterly unconscious of his great gifts."[21] John received permission to study Spanish with Thomas Gorman, a fellow seminarian, as they were both to be assigned to the Los Angeles diocese where Spanish would be needed. Gorman was ordained in 1917 and they both went West and became lifelong friends.

Bishop Conaty died on September 18, 1915 and John was obliged to correspond with the Vicar General until September of 1917 when Bishop

John J. Cantwell was appointed the new Bishop of Monterey-Los Angeles. The Theology course was a four year program but on March 22, 1918 the Bishop wrote to the Rector of the Seminary "I wish you would inform Mr. J.J. Crowley that notwithstanding any ambition he may have to taking a course in the University, it will be necessary for him at the present to give his services to this Diocese. When the war is over and if he still has an ambition for a University degree, I will be glad to do all I can to dispense him from parish work. Now, I wish you would prepare him for ordination in June."[22] Three days later Bishop Cantwell sent a telegram to the Rector of the Seminary: "a student Mr. J.J. Crowley at present finishing his third year in Theology should if possible be ordained for this Diocese before Pentecost. I will be very short of priests owing to war conditions. Kindly let me know if this can be done without any serious inconvenience."[23] There may have been little inconvenience on the part of the Rector of the Seminary, but it did cause a strain on the young candidate. True to form John responded in a letter on May 1, 1918:

"Your message, calling me to the Holy Priesthood, was communicated to me on April 12 by the President, Very Rev. Dyer. While it was totally unexpected, because of the proximity of Ordinations, I have been doing my utmost since then to prepare myself for the reception of this, the greatest of dignities. The time has been so short, however that I have scarce been able to do more than learn the ceremonies of the Mass, because I have had to attend my regular classes. Of the fourth year treatises, Holy Eucharist and Matrimony, I have made a fleeting study of the former, but the latter is still to be seen.

"In view of this fact, that with a few extra weeks, during which time I could have the benefit of the experience of a priestly curate in my home parish to help me, I could make an intensive study of *De Matrimonio* and become acquainted with some practical cases for guidance in the confessional, I am going to ask to be allowed to report in Los Angeles during the last week in June or the first week in July. There are other reasons too, more or less weighty which induce me to ask this privilege. The brief warning of my coming Ordination has upset in many ways affairs at home, as I am the oldest in the family, and my father being dead. I have a brother in the Army, [Frank] located near home, who expects to sail soon for France. It would indeed give Mother and him a few happy days to treasure in our imminent separation if they had the opportunity of attending my Masses together during two or three of his weekly furloughs.

"But while these arguments seem to me, because of the personal element, very strong, you, Bishop, perhaps know that my presence in Los Angeles diocese within a shorter time is imperative. In any case, even if you allow me but the week that is required to make the trip to the Coast, I am ready to set out at a moment's notice."[24]

Bishop Cantwell replied on May 7: "I regret as much as you do that I was unable to permit you to finish your course at Baltimore. I do hope that during the first years of your ministry you will make every effort to supply what is wanted to you. I am glad to permit you to remain with your devoted mother and family until the first week in July as the Diocesan clergy go on retreat on the 8th. You will be very useful during these days of retreat."[25]

Eleven short days later on May 18, 1918 John J. Crowley was ordained a priest by the bishop of Fall River, Massachusetts (a concession made so that his family could more easily attend the ceremony). Now "Father" Crowley, he did his utmost in his last remaining days in the East to take advantage of every opportunity to learn more about his new duties. In another letter to Bishop Cantwell he reported: "I am now making up the tract on Matrimony with the assistance of Father Keating of this parish. He likewise furnished me with many opportunities for acquiring experience in the ceremonial of the Church."[26]

2

THE YOUNG PASTOR

On June 18 Father Crowley was obliged to request Bishop Cantwell to send $50.00 for the railroad ticket as its cost was "a severe strain upon my slender resources." [27] He had planned on traveling with Father Tom Gorman, his priest friend, but as that plan did not materialize he was obliged to request the money. His mother, probably embarrassed by the request, later wired the money to the Bishop. As he passed through the desert areas of Arizona and California little did he realize that he would one day become very familiar with the desert and its stark beauty, hidden treasures and fascinating characters. He arrived in Los Angeles on July 6, 1918, took the oath, was examined and given priestly faculties for one year. For a few weeks he was at St. Andrew's Church in Pasadena and on August 16, 1918 he was appointed as assistant at St. Agnes Church in Los Angeles where he served for a little over a year.

This was not a particularly pleasant time for the young priest as he and the pastor did not see eye to eye on several issues. One problem in particular involved a young seminarian assigned for the summer to the parish. His mother had given Father Crowley's mother, who had recently moved from Worcester to Los Angeles, a home until she found one of her own. The seminarian's parents were separated, therefore according to the pastor, he was unfit for the priesthood. Father Crowley did not see the situation in the same light and expressed himself accordingly to the pastor. His Bishop's comment was "while I have been anxious to give every encouragement to young priests, I do think that at times the young priests can act in a very injudicious manner...I cannot permit one priest, and indeed a junior of the clergy, to bring into ecclesiastical court in an informal manner one of the leading pastors of the diocese, and a member of my council."[28]

Fortunately for Father Crowley, he was soon to find a place where he would be more comfortable, although more greatly challenged in every way. In spite of the above incident, apparently the Bishop had great confidence in his abilities and dedication to his priestly duties as shown by his subsequent actions.

Bishop Cantwell, unable to find a priest willing to go to the desert area, put out the word that he would like a volunteer. Father Crowley got up early to be the first in the door when interviews were held. Later, he found out that his friend, Father Gorman, had also wanted the post. Father Crowley got the job and later teased his friend when he became Bishop Gorman of Reno, and sent him a telegram "now who's in the desert?" He put his request for the position in writing in a letter to the Bishop: "In answer to your appeal for a priest to take care of the missions in Inyo County, I hereby volunteer for that position. My fitness for it, or any other considerations that might move you to select me for the post, are known to none better than to yourself, dear Bishop, but I can assure you that I can supply in willingness what I may lack in qualifications. Awaiting your gracious will in the matter, I am Your most obedient servant in Christ."[29] Thus after only little more than a year ordained, he was to become pastor of a huge parish, Inyo County and nearby areas, with no assistant. Surely, a vote of confidence by Bishop Cantwell, in spite of his earlier strict reprimand. In an article in the *Tidings* he wrote:

"Within its borders lie Death Valley, the lowest spot in the United States, 280 feet below sea level, and Mount Whitney, the highest peak, 14,501 [sic] feet above the level of the sea."[30] Mount Whitney at that time was the highest point in the then 48 states, (now listed as being 14,495 feet.) Mount McKinley, Alaska at 20,320 feet is the highest peak in the present fifty states.

Lone Pine, Big Pine, Independence and Bishop were key towns in the Owens Valley. These towns were built in the shadow of California's Eastern Sierra Nevada. Lone Pine is the gateway to Mount Whitney to the west. To the east are the White Mountains, the Inyo Range and Owens Lake. When Father Crowley came to Inyo County in 1919, Owens Lake still had some water, drying up completely in 1929, and its shores were a valuable source of soda and potash. The surrounding foothills and mountains were scattered with mining ventures of all kinds,–gold, silver, lead, talc, borax, aluminum, tungsten and zinc. Among these were Cerro Gordo, the Minnietta Mine, the Modoc Mine, Darwin, and numerous others in the Panamints and Death Valley in eastern Inyo County.

Owens Valley had been lush from the waters from the high Sierra. Irrigation ditches built in the late nineteenth century by early pioneers on both sides of the Owens River watered pastures, dairy ranches, apple, peach and pear orchards, fields of alfalfa and corn, along with grape vineyards. In the mid nineteenth century Lone Pine had been called *El Pueblo de las Uvas* or the town of grapes by its Mexican settlers. Mary

Austin wrote a beautiful chapter in her *Land of Little Rain* that tells that story. Another settlement was called Manzanar, Spanish for apple orchard. Game abounded, such as deer, bighorn sheep, rabbits, quail, pheasant and other small game animals. In the early 1900's fish, such as golden and rainbow trout, had been transplanted from the western streams of the Sierra Nevada and were flourishing in the eastern mountain lakes, Owens River and its tributaries.

When Father Crowley arrived in the area, Owens Valley had begun to return to its former desert aspect due to over-irrigation and the drawing of water from its many streams to the great 223-mile long Los Angeles aqueduct. This project was approved in 1906 and constructed from 1908 to 1913 at the cost of $24 million. "The City," as Los Angeles was called locally, had been purchasing lands for several years when Father Crowley arrived. Sagebrush and saltbush were again the principal vegetation to be seen along the roads of Owens Valley. It was again, as Mary Austin had once called it, "The Land of Little Rain."

Barstow in 1919 was a railroad town, a bustling supply hub for the surrounding area mining activities. It had a small church named in honor of St. Joseph. Randsburg was a mining town with a booming economy. A little church, Santa Barbara, had been built there in 1904.

In the April 1922 issue of *The Extension Magazine* Father Crowley made a plea in an anonymous article "In the Footsteps of Junipero–By a California Missionary." The Extension Society was a Catholic church organization which raised funds to build churches and schools for poor and rural areas. With the article were photos of his churches in Bishop, Lone Pine, Randsburg and Barstow, along with one of his Model T Ford on a dirt road. Other photos depicted events in his parishes. In vivid prose Father Crowley described his situation:

"With such an expanse of territory it was out of the question to try to establish a headquarters, and thus I gained the enviable reputation of being an 'ecclesiastical tramp,' covering a little over 50,000 miles, or twice around the globe, in fourteen months of flivvering. Starting at Bishop on the first Sunday of the month, I tried to give regular monthly masses in each of the following churches and station. The distances indicated are the miles from the stations to the nearest church: first Sunday, Bishop, to Big Pine 18 miles; second Sunday, Lone Pine, to Independence 15 miles, to Keeler 16 miles, to Cartago 22 miles, to Darwin 40 miles; third Sunday, Randsburg, to Trona 40 miles; fourth Sunday, Barstow, to Yermo 9 miles, to Ludlow 55 miles, to Death Valley 165 miles.

"The end of the month found me back in Bishop again, reading letters from indignant friends and creditors who wondered why a parish priest did not answer his mail the next day. Truly, solitude has its charms. Practically all my traveling was done by machine, but to some points, as to Death Valley, the railroad was quicker and cheaper. The auto was indispensable, however, for visiting the families living far from the railroad, mines and isolated hamlets, for the only spiritual leaven these poor people received was the visit of the priest. Breakdowns of course, were to be expected, and delays, but having had the seat-back cut for sleeping I felt no qualms about being caught in the desert a hundred miles from nowhere, and many a hotel bill has been saved while I snored beneath the stars."[31]

When Father Crowley wrote "County of Contrasts" in 1924, he stated there were not more than 600 even nominal Catholics in Inyo County. This was due to its isolation geographically and lack of transportation, combined with the impossibility of adequate instruction for those scattered singly or in small groups over its vast area. There is no record that the Franciscan Padres ever ventured on the eastern side of the Sierras, so the Paiute Indians, who numbered about 1500 in Inyo County, were not Catholic.

Over the years various itinerant priests, namely Fathers Scannell, Aguilera, Carrasco and Marron served in Inyo. Father Patrick Malachy Bannon, the "Father Shannon" of Mary Austin's works, first visited Lone Pine in 1882. Others who came later were Father James O'Neill and then Father Leo Foin who built the first church in Bishop in 1905. His successor, Father Raphael Fuhr, for six years made the rounds of Inyo, parts of Kern and San Bernardino counties, saying Mass wherever he could get a group of Catholics together. No resident priest served the Inyo area until Bishop Cantwell visited the region in 1919 and appointed Father Austin Fleming to build a simple church in Lone Pine. The Bishop returned in the fall for the blessing of the little church of Santa Rosa in Lone Pine, as yet devoid of furnishings. Here Father Crowley narrated his own story beginning with the year 1919:

"In November of that year the present pastor was appointed to care for the churches of Bishop, Lone Pine, Randsburg and Barstow, located respectively in Inyo, Kern and San Bernardino counties, a parish of some thirty thousand square miles, equal in area to all of Ireland, or to all of the New England states with the exception of the state of Maine. The nearest of these churches were sixty miles apart, the farthest two hundred and twenty five. Bishop Cantwell furnished the means for the pur-

chase of a Ford, without which systematic development of the Catholic life of the region would be impossible. Thus equipped I began at Bishop on the first Sunday of the month and celebrated Mass there, the first time to a congregation of four Catholics. Then driving south through Owens Valley, celebrating Mass in other small towns in private homes, halls or schools, as opportunity offered. I arrived in Lone Pine for the second Sunday, where my first congregation numbered eight people. Then south and east 100 miles to Randsburg for the third Sunday, where the first time I celebrated Mass there were five people present. Then south and east sixty-five miles to Barstow for the fourth Sunday, where my first Mass was attended by fifteen people. Then down along the Santa Fe Railroad to Death Valley and back again to Bishop for the first Sunday of the month, thus completing the circuit. In this way giving these people regular monthly service, a distance of more than 50,000 miles, or twice around the earth, was covered in about sixteen months, most of it in the Ford, which had been arranged so that I could sleep in it, thus enabling me to save many hotel bills when caught on the desert at night between my missions. After a year and a half of this systematic attendance the Catholics at Barstow had returned to the practice of their religion in sufficient numbers to justify the Bishop in placing a resident pastor there, which narrowed down my field of labor considerably. Six months more, and a mining boom accomplished a like result in Randsburg, so that early in 1922 Inyo County had for the first time a resident pastor, who now felt more or less confined within his little 10,000 square mile enclosure.

"Just previous to this we had purchased property in Bishop for the construction of a new church. The old building had no sacristy, no quarters for the priest, no adjoining property for future expansion–in fact stood within ten feet of a noisy blacksmith shop that furnished constant peril from fire. With a gift of $1,000 from the Catholic Church Extension Society of Chicago the new church of Our Lady of Perpetual Help was begun late in 1921, and the first Mass was celebrated there at midnight on Christmas of that year. The interior, still uncompleted, (we had borrowed all we dared from the bank) had been fitted up with the old altar, confessional and pews from the chapel which we had sold for lumber. One of the sacristies in this new edifice served as a bedroom for the pastor.

"In 1921 we were fortunate enough to be able to purchase the Protestant Episcopal Church in Randsburg for $200. We wrecked this building and transported the lumber and equipment over the desert by

truck 100 miles to Lone Pine, where the pews were set up in the little church, the altar became a confessional and the walls and rafters became a sacristy and part of the rectory. The Extension Society gave us our little wooden altar, our stations and sanctuary lamp, while other good friends donated vestments, altar furnishings, etc., so that the little church of Santa Rosa was soon decently, if modestly, furnished. A bell and funds for a tower were also donated and this tower was built over the original porch, as indicated in the photograph.

"Extension, fairy godmother of the mission, again aided us with $500 towards the building of a rectory and the exterior of this was completed at once with the help of other generous donors and money borrowed on the Bishop's note. Of the interior, even to this day but three rooms are furnished, namely, what will eventually be the housekeeper's bedroom, in which the pastor sleeps at present; a little parish office and library and kitchen, where the pastor cooks his meals if he does not go out to a restaurant or share the humble fare of one of his parishioners.

"Such was the material condition of the Inyo County missions early in 1922. When Randsburg was removed from my care I began to say Mass in each church every second Sunday, the first time in history that these people had ever enjoyed such a privilege. It is difficult for city-bred Catholics to realize the deprivation the dwellers in the desert have suffered, or to appreciate how far they have drifted from the faith. Mass once a month, once in six months, once a year, frequently no Mass for years had been their portion–was it any wonder that now they knew naught of the liturgy, nay worse, that hundreds had no desire to return to the practice of their religion, and some were so hopelessly entangled in marriages, mixed or invalid, that return was impossible. I have baptized three or four children in the same family at the same time in Inyo, because when they were born there was no priest here to baptize them. I have married grandmothers and grandfathers while their own grandchildren sat in the pews and watched the ceremony because when they wished to marry there had been no priest here to marry them. My Sunday School teachers had never seen a Sister or a Catholic School–these things existed for them only in catechisms and picture-books.

"Yet, despite all these handicaps, the congregations were steadily growing. Experience teaches every missionary that the faith grows in more than direct proportion to the frequency with which Sunday Mass is offered in each center, so I prayed for the day when it would be possible to offer Mass every Sunday in both churches. The day came sooner than I dreamed, owing to the construction of a State highway from In-

dependence,16 miles north of Lone Pine, and Bishop. This is not a paved road, but rather a graded sand and dirt thoroughfare, far shorter and easier than the old ruts that wound in and out of the dunes and over and under the sagebrush and boulders. This brought the two churches within striking distance and on January 7,1923, I celebrated Mass in Bishop, and two and a half hours afterward, in Lone Pine. This has been the regular Sunday schedule ever since. On one Sunday Mass is celebrated in Lone Pine at 8:00 o'clock, and by driving in the Ford over the sand roads sixty miles to Bishop, the late Mass in Lone Pine. Thus the sixty or more Catholics who attend Mass in Bishop now, and the eighty odd in Lone Pine feel that they owe a debt of gratitude to a certain Detroit millionaire motor-car manufacturer for his aid in lifting them to the ranks of 'Honest-to-God' Catholics.

"In the spring of 1923 Bishop Cantwell gave the writer permission to speak of the Inyo County missions in the large parishes of his diocese in an endeavor to raise funds to continue the work. This task, complete last winter, had a very successful outcome, and a great step forward has been taken with this aid. The interior of the church at Bishop was at last plastered and painted, and new pews made and installed. A comfortable residence adjoining the church, completely furnished, was purchased for a rectory with $2,000 cash and a two-year mortgage for the balance, $3,000. At Lone Pine a small hall was constructed for parish use, with a basement that can later become the nest-egg for a parochial school. Nothing further was done to the rectory, because there was no need, nor will there be until it is necessary to have a housekeeper there.

"Sixteen miles south of Lone Pine, on the banks of Owens Lake, lies the town of Keeler, a little community supported by the mining and talc industries in part, but principally by the large soda-ash plant in the neighborhood. This refinery employs nearly 300 men, most of them Mexicans, many of whom live with their families hard by. Last spring, Extension gave us the initial financial push towards a little chapel there, and at present we have in Keeler the partly completed St. Ann's Church, at the rear of which are three rooms in which a resident catechist has her abode. This good lady came from Chicago for this purpose and is supported in part by *Our Sunday Visitor*. Mass is celebrated in Keeler every Saturday now, and the congregation, seated in the old pews transported from Bishop, are content to wait until Divine Providence sends them too the inestimable privilege of Sunday Mass."[32]

It is noteworthy to consider that before the reforms of the Council of Vatican II, Catholics were obliged to fast from both food and drink until

after Mass. For Father Crowley this meant nothing from midnight Saturday evening until after his last Mass on Sunday, probably some time after noon. Driving over dusty desert roads then was even more difficult for him.

There are very few written records of his time as pastor in Inyo from 1919 to 1924 except for the articles above. Gladys (Conway) Crosby Millner, a Bishop resident, tells of there being only five Catholic families in Bishop when Father Crowley arrived in 1919. There was a strong anti-Catholic atmosphere that made it hard for Catholics to practice their religion. She remembers helping Father Crowley at parish fundraisers at the Armistice Day parades. She helped her mother at a hot dog stand and there met her future husband, Gene Crosby, whose mother was also helping out.

A parishioner from Lone Pine relates the story of how, as an infant, she was critically ill at her home in Laws, outside of Bishop. Someone sent word to Father Crowley in Randsburg a distance of about 160 miles and he hurried to Laws and baptized her. She attributes the fact that she is now in her seventies and still healthy to his kindly ministrations.

In February 1922 Father Crowley's mother went back to Worcester to finalize her business affairs regarding property she owned there. In a poignant episode, reminiscent of their Irish experience, the two daughters, Alice and Pauline were on their way back from the east coast and saw their mother's train at a mid-America station where their westbound train was stopped. She saw them also, but they never spoke to, or touched each other. That was the last time they saw their mother. Father Crowley got word that his mother had a stroke and was dying, but he arrived in Worcester only in time for the funeral. His beloved mother died at the age of 51. Father Crowley reported: "She died with a smile."[33] Again, in 1922, the full responsibility of the family fell on his shoulders, a task that he gladly accepted and was acknowledged by all his brothers and sisters.

3

FRESNO INTERLUDE

In 1924 a new diocese was created, that of Monterey-Fresno and Bishop John B. MacGinley became its first bishop. He was an Irish priest serving in the Philippines when he met a Maryknoll priest who had been a friend of Father Crowley's in his days in Massachusetts. He told Bishop MacGinley: "if you want a good priest for a Chancellor, look up Father Crowley who is in Lone Pine." Apparently, the Bishop who was new to the California scene, took his advice and chose Father Crowley as his first Chancellor. A Chancellor is to a diocese what a city manager is to a mayor. Father Crowley's talents were soon put to the test, as there were many new churches to be built, schools to open and innovative programs to be created and nurtured. Fresno is about 90 miles from Lone Pine as the crow flies, but by road it is a drive of over 230 miles.

After about five years in his extended Lone Pine parish, it was with a heavy heart that he left his beloved desert parish and took on administrative duties in Fresno. He threw himself into this new task with his usual zeal and enthusiasm. However, he did not forget his people back in Lone Pine. One young lady, Irene Brichaga, had recently graduated from high school and knew some Latin as well as her native language of Spanish. Father Crowley quickly recruited her to be the diocesan secretary. She stayed there several years before returning to her family in Lone Pine. She volunteered her services to Father Crowley when he too returned to Lone Pine in 1934. It was Irene who lent Father Crowley her portable Smith-Corona typewriter when he needed it for writing columns while on the road. Her mother, Dominga Brichaga, offered meals at her home for the busy Padre when he retured to Lone Pine. Her aunt, Blanche Ochoa did housekeeping work for the Padre.

In 1925 at the age of 34, Father Crowley was made a Monsignor by Pope Pius XI. In 1925 in addition to his duties as Chancellor, he was assigned to St. John's Cathedral in Fresno and was pastor there from 1930 to the summer of 1933. His weekly sermons at the Friday evening Holy Hours were unusually popular and the Cathedral was always packed. Monsignor Francis J. Pointek, a young seminarian at the time, remem-

bers how the church was locked in the evenings, but if Father Crowley worked late, he would find the key that hung in its special place, unlock the doors and say his evening Rosary, his favorite prayer to the Virgin Mary–a daily practice he continued throughout his life.

Father Crowley had a great interest and talent in the liturgical arts and furnishings of the churches. He was invited once to be on the jury panel to judge liturgical art entries at the DeYoung Museum in San Francisco.

Father Crowley was appointed Director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine, a department which supervised and promoted the teaching of Catechism to public school children in "released time" programs and to Catholics in rural areas where there was no parish school. In this capacity he began to write a series of weekly columns in the *Central California Register*, the official Catholic newspaper for the diocese. His column was called "Frater Con" (Brother Confraternity). His first column appeared in December 1929 and continued until 1933. In this catechism program he relied greatly on Catholic young people, mostly women, to actually conduct the classes so a rigorous training period had to be provided for the volunteers. He made a special effort to acknowledge them in his column. Some of his students are still living and recall with fondness the challenges of that experience and their admiration for their director. One, Irene Gage Sundberg recalls that it was Father Crowley who taught her to drive a car and commissioned her on occasion to drive the Bishop to church functions. When she was in Nursing School in San Diego, Father Crowley paid a visit. She was suffering from a severe case of homesickness and was happy to see him. His only comment was: "If you give up nursing, I'll never recommend you for anything else."[34] This brought her suddenly back to reality and she continued on in her career.

Some of Monsignor Crowley's projects were the founding of St. Columba's Guild in Fresno, which was a Catholic Bookstore and library, and St. Agnes, a boarding home for young working women. He served as a chaplain and advisor to a civic endeavor called "Boyology" which was an effort to provide recreational activities for young boys. Word spread of his talents as a speaker and he was often invited to be the principal speaker for the American Legion, Women's Clubs, Rotary and other civic groups. Father Crowley was a member of the Rotary where he was always welcome, in spite of the fact that many members were Masons, a group disapproved of by the Catholic Church. In 1928, Al Smith, a Catholic, was the Democratic candidate for the Presidency and anti-Catholic

rhetoric was widespread. The Klu Klux Klan was active against Catholics at this time. Catholics and Protestants, had at best, an arm's length relationship.This did not deter the young Chancellor who became "all things to all men" of good will–Catholics, Protestants, Jews, Masons and even atheists. This pattern followed him throughout the remainder of his priestly career. It is well to note his gradual maturing attitude to non-Catholics as compared to the somewhat rigid stance shown in his youthful letter regarding his vocation to the priesthood. However, he remained adamant in his stand against divorce, Catholics marrying outside the Church, pornography, and indecent movies and was often perceived by some to be too strict.

One of his projects was to promote the founding of a new Catholic High School, St. Columba's in Fresno. He was acknowledged by the first graduating class as a special friend and inspiration to the young people in the following tribute: "one whose heart is always with the boys and who is doing all in his power against fearful odds, to make the Catholic high school for boys a success."[35] There were to be many more graduations where he was asked to be the principal speaker. His familiarity with graduation ceremonies later inspired one of his inimitable "Sage and Tumbleweed" columns published in the *Central California Register*:

> *June 14, 1936.* After following the Padre about on a round of commencements, I find myself wondering whether there is not a fortune in it for the chap who devised something new in that line. Blindfolded, I could walk the length of any school auditorium in the country, make my bows at the proper place, never miss a step on the stage ascent, and wind up opposite my proper chair. Provided of course that the customary march was played. You know: "Tum, tum..tum-diddy-um-tum tum." And the felicitations, the congratulations on work done, the "go forths" and "be loyals," the hand-clapping as each steps forth for his or her diploma–to one who has attended a hundred or more up and down the land, all these are as standardized as Ford parts. To this poor jaded onlooker, a disappearing stage would be a treat. Imagine the new zest with which we could approach these annual launchings if the speaker of the evening could wave an airy hand and apostrophize, "And now, my dear young people," and the young people would slowly be elevated into view from the nether depths of the boiler room! Especially if the machinery stuck, or the janitor came up with a mop and pail instead of the sweet young things!
>
> On second thought, there is something to be said for the revolving stage. In one compartment, the graduates, who would slowly slide from view as the orator shouted, "Go forth!" to be followed by a life-sized group of the

school trustees in session, battling over the appointment of next year's teachers, and finally the school orchestra, fiddling itself out of sight and hearing with *All Around the Mulberry Bush.* Of course a runway, or even a slide, from the rear of the stage to the hall floor would be helpful. Diploma in hand, the graduate would step on the slide and –whisk! away to the waiting world. A sort of suggestion of the skids that will be put under them tomorrow, as it were. If this slide were accompanied by the roll of the snaredrum and the rising scream of a whistle, such as they have in the circus when the iron-toothed man slides from the tent-top to sawdust along a taut wire, I believe much of the ennui would be relieved.

Facetious? Perhaps I am, but observe the glee with which the audience seizes the untoward or unlooked-for interruption and you must admit that only grim duty has held it still up to that point. I wince yet when I recall the cheers that greeted my full length sprawl upon a high school stage as I climbed up to deliver the Gettysburg address. That tumble hallowed my act far beyond my poor power to add or detract. Or the joy with which the Bishop audience hailed Dan McCarthy's knocking over the basket of flowers as he walked up for his certificate. Or how long Mr. Blee had to wait to explain his real meaning after he had asked "the audience to remain seated while the seniors passed out!" So a congressional medal to the citizen or citizens who will lead us out of this maze of marching minions, of regimented bows and mechanized applause; who will bring us to our feet with some new fashion of saying: "well done thou good and faithful child."

I suppose I am saying this because I am an old crank, one who has no Johnnie or Mary in the class, and hence looks at the group and not at the pride and joy of my household. Since I have not known the joy of counting seven before my Arabella reaches the chairman of the board or of knowing that it is Willie's tromboning that keeps the orchestra in line, I unquestionably lack that which makes the most monotonous program a sweet memory, the consciousness that it serves as a frame for my own flesh and blood. As long as there are fathers and mothers, graduations will never be monotonous. But honestly, what do you think of that disappearing stage idea?

Father Crowley took time off for a yearly retreat and vacation. On one vacation he reported to the Bishop that he had caught 103 fish! He often took groups of boys to Yosemite National Park and became well known to the rangers there. One retreat he attended at Notre Dame, Indiana paid off when he was able to obtain some hard-to-get tickets for the Notre Dame–University of Southern California football game in Los Angeles for several of his friends. On another occasion, Mary Gower, daughter of Harry Gower (Superintendent of the Pacific Coast Borax Company in Death Valley Junction), had been a student at the Univer-

sity of Southern California, and offered Father Crowley a ticket to the game, but told him it would have to be on the USC side. He gladly accepted but told her: "I'll yell for Notre Dame!"[36]

In 1928 Father Crowley went East to visit his brother Frank in Lowell, Massachusetts. He was invited in 1930 by his old classmate, Ducky Walsh, by then a respected attorney in Worcester to be the principal speaker at the fifteenth reunion of the Holy Cross class of 1915. Unfortunately, Father Crowley wrote back his regrets: "Yes, I am indeed aware that we are fifteen years out. My gray hairs and weary limbs remind me all too frequently that I am no longer the human flash who used to catch the South Worcester car in two seconds after he had heard the wheels grind as it passed the post office. Now please believe me when I say that it is one of the hardest things I have had to write when I tell you that it will be impossible to be with you in June. I would give everything I owned to be back again with the gang, regardless of whom the speaker might be...[here he mentions commitments to retreats, family reunions etc]. With all these considerations, plus the frightful debility in the treasury, it is out of the question for me to go East this year, even if I got the consent of the Bishop who would have to do my work while I was gone, since I have no assistant. Surely, in that class of a hundred orators you can find a score who will be glad to refurbish 'the old backyard,' Linden Lane and 'the Blackstone sliding on its base.' To all my classmates, and particularly to yourself, *ad multos annos*. May we meet on the Twentieth Anniversary in undiminished splendor. In the meantime remember a hearty welcome awaits you where the sun sets last in America."[37]

It was during his years at Fresno that three of his sisters entered the convent. Alice and Pauline had gone to Mercy Hospital in San Diego for nurses' training and in 1925 both entered the order of the Sisters of Mercy in Burlingame, California, now known as Sister Petra and Sister Paula. They both continued their professions as nurses, Sister Petra being administrator of the Bakersfield Hospital for some time. His sister May, who became Sister Josephine, in the same year joined the Sisters of the Holy Family in San Francisco, an order which was mainly involved in teaching Catechism in rural areas and to public school children. His brother George had joined the Jesuits and was still in the seminary. His brother Frank who had been in Washington, D.C. with the National Catholic Welfare Conference was now married and with a family and in 1930 was asked to be Dean of Education at St. Louis University. At this time Fred had entered the diocesan seminary. His sister Nora (now Mrs. Elmer Hansen) had married and was living on South Hoover St. in Los

Angeles, giving him a place of welcome and respite when he needed it. Of the eight surviving children of Michael and Nora Crowley, six had eventually come to serve in the front lines of their church. Father Crowley was always a welcome visitor at the Sisters of Mercy, and he and his sisters, who shared his wonderful sense of humor, had some noisy and hilarious reunions.

In the Monterey-Fresno area, the Catholic population in 1924 was about 50,000 in 42 parishes, 22 missions, 11 parochial schools, two hospitals. In 1933 the population of Catholics was about 79,000 with 54 parishes, and 22 missions. In nine years the burden of administering the diocese had increased considerably and after 1929 the effects of the depression were evident everywhere.

Bishop MacGinley had requested that the diocese be dedicated to St. Therese of Lisieux, the Little Flower, and Father Crowley was drawn to devotion to this modern Saint who followed the "little way" of holiness and was the Patroness of missionaries. He was able to get a first class relic (fragment of a saint's bones) and a statue for the Cathedral that was the work of a prominent Italian sculptor in Rome. Later, in his church in Lone Pine he always displayed a statue of his patroness and continued his devotion to her.

It was in Fresno that Father Crowley met several people who later became staunch friends in his later career in Owens Valley. One was Harry Clinch whose first meeting with Father Crowley is described in this book's foreword. Harry's father later became the diocesan bookkeeper until his death in 1933. During his summer vacations from the seminary, Harry assisted Father Crowley in his parish work, teaching catechism classes, serving as his altar boy and accompanying him on his many trips.

Another person he met was Ralph Merritt, a non-Catholic but a good friend. Ralph had been comptroller of the University of California, Berkeley, U.S. Food Administrator for California in World War I, and a friend of Herbert Hoover and Horace Albright of the National Park Service. He also helped solve problems in the rice industry and was president of Sun-Maid Raisins from 1923-1929.

When Bishop MacGinley arrived he was determined to eliminate the multitude of special collections during Masses for various causes. He began a huge fund raising campaign that involved not only Catholics of the diocese, but the whole community, especially in the area around Fresno. A bond was floated for $750,000 and a corps of over 6,000 volunteers was recruited. Even Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth were gener-

ous enough to donate an exhibition game for the drive. Up to $625,425 was raised in pledges. Among the members of this fund-raising committee was Ralph Merritt. Father Crowley became involved in this enormous effort and met Merritt during his activities with the campaign and also at Rotary meetings of which they were both members. He realized that here was a man dedicated to public service and with a multitude of talents. Later Merritt joined Father Crowley in Owens Valley to help the people of that area.

From almost the beginning of his episcopate, Bishop MacGinley suffered from a heart condition and was often sick. Beginning in 1928 he was often on a period of sick leave in the Phillipines or Ireland. Father Crowley and the Vicar General, Monsignor Raymond Mestres were left to run the diocese. This plan was not a major problem until the time of the Depression when many of the pledges that had been made in the 1924 fund drive were not kept. People just did not have the money to fulfill their pledges. The Vicar General appointed in 1930 was Father Philip Scher, a man of great talent who had been very successful at reducing a large debt when he was pastor in Bakersfield. He and Father Crowley were at opposite ends of the spectrum in regards to management style and personality. In addition he resided in Monterey so communication of necessity often had to be in writing, which led to several misunderstandings. Father Crowley scrupulously deferred to the Vicar General, who took the Bishop's place in his absence and awaited his decisions after notifying him of the problems. For his part, Father Scher kept expecting the Bishop to return at any time, and often postponed making the necessary decisions himself. These were difficult times for both priests who were trying to do their jobs as best they both knew how.

Father Crowley carried on his duties of attending to "paper work," listening to problems of the priests of the diocese, finding substitutes when needed and in general problem-solving.

In late 1931 Father Scher requested that they hire an auditor to go over the books in Fresno. Father Crowley wrote: "The auditor finds the task a little bigger than he first anticipated but he is making remarkable progress and seems to have a thorough grasp of every angle of our financial problems." In that same letter he adds: "I wish to repeat what I told you on my visits to Monterey, that I am with you one hundred per cent and trust that you will always take up with me anything that appears to be or that you have heard to be to the contrary... it is only on next July that we must be careful, as that is the date on which we must make our principal payments to the bond companies. However, this is no reason

for delaying our auditing, but I mention it in order to make your mind a little easier, knowing that you have the responsibility in the matter. I further assure you that we are watching our expenditures very closely and that nothing has been paid from the Chancery Office that is not absolutely necessary. We have cut down the personnel as instructed and we have taken out phones and are watching every possible leak."[38]

In June of 1932 one of the two banks where they had their loans was requesting statements of the diocese's financial outlook, setting forth how much it would fall short of the principal and interest payments. Apparently there was a debt of $25,000 on the principal and $10,000 on the interest, a goodly sum in 1932. In a letter to Father Scher dated June 3, 1932 Father Crowley wrote: "I, of course, have always believed that the Bishop would return and his letter of a month ago stated that this would be after the Congress [Eucharistic Congress in Dublin] as I told you. However, I have no exact information and, like you, wonder what should be done about the July principal and interest problem. Even if he returned before that date he would hardly have sufficient time to give the matter due consideration."[39]

Father Crowley made personnel and salary cuts, including his own and promised not to borrow any more funds. When the funds were due in August, an appeal was made to the bishops of San Francisco to intercede but they were not in a position to aid the floundering diocese. Bankruptcy had to be declared, but unlike many bankruptcies, all debts to the creditors were eventually paid off, at the cost of very stringent budgets for all the parishes in the diocese.

Bishop MacGinley's health was too precarious for him to return to this stressful situation, so the Apostolic Delegate, with the help of Bishop MacGinley's friend whom he had known in the Philippines, Cardinal Dougherty of Philadelphia, informed the Bishop that it would be best for the church that he resign. He had been on the ship returning from Ireland, but was asked to return to his native Ireland. Later Father Crowley wrote a letter to the Apostolic Delegate to request that a reasonable pension be given to Bishop MacGinley back in Ireland as he was living in poverty on a very meager disability fund. This, apparently, was granted.

Father Phillip Scher was to act in the place of the Bishop until he was officially appointed as the new Bishop of the Monterey-Fresno diocese in May of 1933. As soon as the appointment was official, Father Crowley wrote the bishop-elect the following letter dated May 8, 1933:

"In order to give you as far as is in my power the greatest freedom in

undertaking the tremendous task which lies before you as Bishop, I hereby submit my resignation as Chancellor of the diocese, an appointment which has perdured since the former administration. I am fully aware that you could remove me from office without my having resigned, but I feel that the most sincere evidence of my loyalty to you would be to signify that I have no desire to hold any office to which you have not, as my Bishop, appointed me. The course I am taking is one which I had fully determined upon at the resignation of Bishop MacGinley and would have been followed regardless of whom the Holy Father might have appointed as my superior. It is the only way in which both you and your loyal priests can be assured of an absolutely 'new deal.'

"Further, inasmuch as the Cathedral is primarily your church and the Cathedral rectory your home, I want you to feel the same absolute freedom in choosing your rector and perforce associate in the Cathedral parish. Hence I likewise tender my resignation as rector of St. John's Cathedral. In this decision, as in the above, I am guided purely and simply by my desire to aid you and have set aside whatever personal feeling I have towards the church and people with whom I have tried to labor.

"My position as Diocesan Consultor, I believe, becomes vacant *ipso facto* at your consecration. The other appointive positions I hold, as director of the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine and chaplain of the National Council of Catholic Women, I also wish to vacate, in line with the policy already outlined. These resignations become effective immediately as far as I am concerned but subject, of course, to your will or even wish in the matter."[40]

Father Crowley helped with all the necessary arrangements for the consecration of the new bishop which occurred on June 29, 1933. On July 31, 1933 the new Bishop asked Father Crowley to accept the parish of Porterville, between Fresno and Bakersfield. He answered in a short letter dated August 4, 1933: "Your letter, dated July 31, reached me today. In it you ask me to accept the parish of Porterville, and ask my loyalty and service, promising 'appreciation on your part as time and circumstances will permit.'

"In line with my written resignation from the Chancellorship and rectorship of St. John's Cathedral, and the sentiments expressed therein, I gladly accept the appointment to Porterville, without binding you in any way to any future recognition of this or any other service. I cannot see aught in this but plain duty."[41]

There must have been many farewell parties for the beloved priest by the parishioners of the Cathedral and by the many persons he dealt

with in his various duties. Even the prestigious Hotel Fresno invited him to be "our guest at any time." He had also been offered a lifetime membership in the Automobile Club of Southern California.

At the time of receiving his new assignment Father Crowley was on vacation at Hermosa Beach with friends, but soon reported as pastor at St. Anne's Church in Porterville. He was there but a short time when, in late September, he was hospitalized in Mercy Hospital in Bakersfield with streptococcic pneumonia. His condition was critical for some time. After Christmas he went into Mercy Hospital in San Diego for a tonsillectomy and a repair of a hernia. A few days later, in his own words in a letter to his brother George: "A frightful infection set in the wound. This caused fever and loss of sleep, finally resulting in a hemorrhage in the wound. Sister Petra arrived just ten minutes before they rushed me to surgery to stop the hemorrhage. Then the fun began. Between injections of anti-streptococcus serum and blood-transfusions and intravenous feeding, I was a mighty sick 'woman' or so they tell me now."[42]

Later his sister, Sister Paula, wrote a letter to Monsignor James Dowling and in it she mentioned "your great generosity in those many transfusions." [43] The family and the doctors feared that he might never pull through and she asked her brother if there was anything he would like to get straightened out so both he and she would feel better about everything. He stated that spiritually he was ready but with regard to his will some changes should be made. He obviously must have been very close to death.

In a letter to Bishop Scher regarding his brother Fred's upcoming ordination Father Crowley reported: "My health continues to improve, thank God. The doctors are injecting a special anti-streptococcus filtrate in my veins to combat the poison that has been causing my arthritis and weakening my heart. This, plus the sun bathing, is helping me."[44] In February he wrote to Monsignor James Culleton regarding his disability benefits and included this note: "My progress, though discouragingly slow, is apparently sure, as my aches seem to be lessening and my heart returning to normal."[45] Whether the stress he endured as Chancellor and Rector of the Cathedral and the subsequent financial problems of the diocese had anything to do with his illness, one can only guess. One can imagine how frustrating it must have been for this young priest to be confined to inactivity when his innermost desires were to be up and about tending his flock. Probably his great love of life pulled him through and the bed rest and excellent treatment by his doctors. In an undated "Sage and Tumbleweed" column that was never published,

he honored his personal physician in Bakersfield, Dr. McNamara:

> They found him stretched on the floor of his room, where death had caught up with him at last. He had not had time even to reach for one of the nitroglycerine tablets he always carried with him for these heart attacks. The heart that was so full of love for his fellowman that it drove his complaining body on until the last grain of his life's sands had run, had at last come to a full stop. The doctor who knew not time nor rest when others were in pain, nor night nor day nor sun nor sleet slowed his flight to the side of the afflicted, had answered his last call and gone to rest without end. At Mercy Hospital in Bakersfield they slipped his card out of the physician's register, "Dr. McNamara will not be in today."
>
> Inscrutable are the ways of God, and it is well for us often that His ways are not ours. That a man of Dr. McNamara's intellectual brilliancy should slip away from the practice of his Catholic faith is not an uncommon phenomenon, even if hard for many of us to understand. But that such a man would retain an abiding and altogether extraordinary respect and affection for the clergy and religious of the Church is not the customary turn of such cases. And when we recall that this noble gentleman, he was never a whit less than that to all of us, consistently edified his compatriots by his domestic and civic virtues, notable among the latter being his fearless defense of the rights of the Sisters' hospital against the political machinations of their ill-wishers, then Thaddeus M. McNamara stands alone. Rather, he stood alone, for he has gone to the Great Physician. If you had known him as I have you would not dare to hint to any one of the twelve moist-eyed nuns that knelt at his private Mass that he had found at the hands of the Master Healer aught but mercy. Their friend and father had conscientiously resisted to the end their unceasing prayers for his return to the fold, but these daughters of Catherine McCauley did not despair. For they remembered the words of the doctor's Judge, "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." God would be good to their doctor.
>
> He dragged me back once from the brink of the grave, and the hours we battled together for this poor fruitless extension of time are among the cherished memories of many years. His patient, perspiring face, mopped every minute by an attendant nun as he searched my arms for a suitable inlet for blood transfusions, and his reassuring smile as he stood at the bed-end and made my worried questions seem so unnecessary, will live long as memory lasts. A master of English diction, he cheered my convalescence by his recitation of whole poems from Shakespeare or Shelley. Once he caught me calling a gentian a gilia, and thence grew up another bond, the link of lovers of the lilies of the field. My last trip to Bakersfield took me an extra hour. I spent it gathering new specimens of Kern Canyon flora for him. He retaliated by having his daughter–for he was ill then, send me Jaeger's *California Deserts*. Between its treasured lines I can see his kindly eyes, from its

> pages I can catch, almost, a whiff of his corn-cob. He confided to me once that his middle initial stood for Maria, an old Spanish custom. O Mary, in whose arms was laid the bloody and broken body of your Son, we beg you to intercede for one who laid down his life for those whom Jesus loved, the poor, the maimed, the sufferers for justice, the virgins who follow the Lamb![46]

The last paragraph of the article is incomplete, but the above shows his respect for a professional who had been so kind to him. It also shows how perceptive he was in choosing a simple gift to please his physician. Why it was never published is not known. The original typewritten copy with corrections was among his brother George's possessions.

4

BACK TO LONE PINE

In March of 1934 Father Crowley received permission from his doctor to visit Fresno. As another priest had replaced Father Crowley at Porterville, he requested of Bishop Scher that he again be assigned to Lone Pine and the other churches of Owens Valley. He thought that with the drier desert air his health would return to normal and he could continue his priestly duties. To this request Bishop Scher assented and in May 1934 Father Crowley again returned to his beloved Owens Valley as pastor of Santa Rosa parish in Lone Pine, with responsibilities for the churches in Bishop, Keeler and the missions in Death Valley.

One of the first persons he encountered upon his return to Owens Valley was his old time friend from Fresno, Ralph Merritt, who had been ill with polio and was interested in mining ventures in the area. The two sick men discussed their future together as Irving Stone recounted the meeting with Father Crowley's words:

"'I have an idea, Ralph,' he said softly. 'Let us both find some good fight. We'll forget the past and get well.'

"The condemned men shook hands on their bargain. Three days later, the friend saw Father Crowley again. He was able to walk a few steps unaided; there was a faint touch of color in his cheeks.

"'You must have found a good one!'

"'The best,' replied Father Crowley with a quiet chuckle. 'We are going to work for the rehabilitation of Owens Valley. With God's help, we're going to persuade the City of Los Angeles to let us buy back our property and use our water on it and own our valley once again.'"[47]

Several of John J. Crowley's poems in the *Holy Cross Purple* were written in an Irish dialect and often referred to the fighting spirit of the Irish. Perhaps at this time the following verse from "One Touch of Nature" came to his mind:

> For whin coats are peeled an' sleeves are up
> An' they think they're in the right
> The divvle they care who their allies are
> In a rough an' tumble fight.[48]

Although his official title was "Monsignor" it was his choice to be called "Father" Crowley as he said the desert folk would think he was high-hatting them. His unpretentious clothes were of desert or khaki colors to go with the dusty roads he often traveled. He wore leather puttees, high top boots, khaki riding breeches, and an army shirt with the Roman collar underneath.

Later when he had many clerical visitors to the area, he explained why khaki should be the desert clerical garb:

> *November 25, 1934.* Inyo's clerical callers learn rapidly that the customary black is no color for the desert traveler. When they find the dry bed of Owens Lake suspended, by a miracle of levitation, half-way up the slope of the Inyos in one of our south winds, thence settling on every man, woman, and beast in a fine dun coating, they long for the habit of St. Francis. Even the nuns down in Las Vegas in the Holy Family convent admit that they never knew what grime was until they had been enveloped in one of our desert storms. Last Easter Monday they returned from a trip to the Valley of Fire to find the dust had sifted through the ceiling and encased their altar lilies in a cerement of good Nevada soil. Yes, dear friends, the good nuns dusted the lilies. Such is life in the far West.

Happy to be back in his beloved valley, he threw his whole heart and soul into getting reacquainted with the region. He kept quite busy with churches in Bishop, Lone Pine and Keeler. He also visited Death Valley, Mammoth Lakes and Inyokern as chaplain to the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC).

Proof that his health had indeed returned is found in his climb up Mt. Whitney. On September 12, 1934 Father Crowley was the first priest to celebrate Mass on the top of Mt. Whitney on a portable altar outside the Smithsonian hut on the 14,495-foot peak. He was assisted by Harry Clinch, the seminarian from Fresno who was on summer leave.The two had packed the Mass vestments, portable altar, altar stone, prayer cards, the chalice and camping necessities on a mule and hiked as far as Chrysler and Cook's Outpost Camp at 10,300 feet. Here they rested for the night and added water and wood to their pack. Arriving at the summit before noon, Father Crowley said Mass to celebrate the feast of the Holy Name of the Virgin Mary. A young hiker, Charles Shelton, (later to become publisher of *Desert* magazine) passed by and caught the moment on his camera. The photo was printed in the *Los Angeles Times* of Nov. 13, 1938 as a photo contest entry and later circulated throughout the United States. After Mass they broke their fast with some hot coffee over a campfire and admired the view from the top. It was a far cry from the

ailing Padre who arrived in Lone Pine a few short months before!

The Padre related the story of Mt. Whitney in Sage and Tumbleweed":

September 23, 1934. The top of the United is disappointing to the tourist who has pictured this highest of our peaks as a solitary monarch, like Fujiyama or Shasta. Viewed from the east, and it can be seen from that direction only up the gorge of Lone Pine Creek, it appears lower than nearer neighbors. In fact it is but two-hundred-odd feet higher than Williamson, six miles north, and the ridge which it tops averages 13,000 feet in elevation. From the west, whence the trail ascends, Mt. Whitney rises in a gentle curve to a level summit, like a nun's veil. One lover of the Sierras has well likened them to a giant billow whose crest seems ready to crash into Owens Valley. This simile aptly describes Whitney's eastern wall, a sheer drop of 1,500 feet to the turquoise tarn below.

A 20-minute drive from Lone Pine, in which you climb 3,000 feet through the sageland that separates the Alabamas from the Sierras, brings you to the present terminus of the Whitney trail. A CCC project soon will carry the road to Hunter's Flat, a pine-clad bench at the 8,500-foot level. Thence, afoot or on horseback, the mountaineer follows Lone Pine Creek from bench to bench, each tread of the giant staircase cradling a lonely lake or a brave little meadow, each riser sprayed with a brawling waterfall or swishing slide. At Ibex park, 'tis said they once found some ibex horns there, the mile-high tawny granite walls draw back to leave an emerald floor about as large as a football stadium. Here, at Outpost camp, you bid goodbye to such luxuries as beds and fire, for a forest service sign warns you that in another mile you will have passed above the timber line.

Suddenly you leave the last lodgepole behind. Even the sturdy stunted grass of the high country disappears and the snow-birds flitting from rock to rock bring home to you that here are the mountains unadorned. Your horse's hoofs ring on the naked granite while you shiver in the gusts that sweep from the ice-covered slopes beside the trail. Cupped in glacial cirques or lost in unlooked-for hollows, lapis-lazuli lakes look strangely out of place in their bare setting. One is reminded of the blue glasses set in topographical models in museums to represent water, or of precious stones just emerging from their matrix. If a piece of the sky had fallen into a crevice of these heaven-raking peaks it could not look bluer, nor more astray, than these mute mothers of our garrulous streams.

Zig-zagging upward on a talus of gray granite beneath beetling cliffs, the trail crosses the divide about three miles south of the great peak itself. From this point on even the most blasé mountaineer must stifle his yawns. The trail literally clings to the west face of the sawteeth that have given the Sierra its name and you grasp the reason that pack animals must reach the summit before noon and none may start back before one o'clock. The only manner in which two horses could pass on that ribbon would be for one

to crawl over the other, which might be a little rough on the riders. The trail remains at the level of the notches between the pinnacles, here about two and a half miles in the air, and in several cases it has actually been buttressed with rocks so that the path itself is the veritable ridge of the range, and from this yard-wide vantage point you can gaze down 10,000 feet into Owens Valley on the east or a like distance into Kern River Canyon on the west. Provided, of course, that the wind sweeping through the gap, or your nerves, or mountain sickness, or all three have not rendered you immune to scenery.

The summit of Whitney is surprisingly flat. Over its several acres are strewn loose, flat rocks, showing unmistakably the work of wind and weather. A stone hut, erected by the Smithsonian Institute in 1909, provides emergency shelter for those unfortunate enough to be caught there in the sudden hail and snowstorms that enshroud this peak even in August. A cairn marks the eastern scarp and close by are two U.S.G.S. plaques. The most recent figures indicate that Whitney is 14,496 feet above sea level. Former surveys set the figure slightly higher. I am sure it was not the traffic that wore it down.

As you have probably read elsewhere, the Padre celebrated Mass on Whitney last week, this being the first religious service ever held on top of the United States. Harry Clinch, a student for the priesthood in this diocese, served the Mass. The Padre told me that when he thumbed over the Sierra and Alpine clubs' registers on the top to record the event he found that not a few previous climbers had taken advantage of the books to set down, in blasphemous language, what they thought of the hardships of the ascent. Even physical proximity to heaven and the presence of the Creator's awe-inspiring handiwork do not prevent some creatures from breathing the language of hell.

As mentioned above, the CCC were beginning their project of road building to Hunter's Flat. The New Deal had begun with President Franklin D. Roosevelt and on March 31, 1933 the Civilian Conservation Corps was founded. This program, commonly known as the CCC, had two goals: 1) to provide work for the unemployed young people and 2) to restore the nation's depleted natural resources. The program took impoverished unemployed, unmarried young men from 17 to 25 from the urban streets and poverty-stricken rural farms and put them under the watchful eyes of the U.S. Army for their camp discipline and housing. A group of trained engineers and other experts were with them out in the field where they worked throughout the United States for the National Park Service and the National Forest Service in the construction of aqueducts, bridges, roads, trails, campgrounds and ranger

stations. They were paid $30 a month, kept $5.00 for the "Captain's table" and the rest was sent home to their families.

One of these camps was established in Lone Pine in the spring of 1933 about eight miles west of Lone Pine in what was then called Hunter's Flat. They worked under the Inyo National Forest Service rangers to build a major camp and from there went out to smaller "spike" camps to help build roads, trails and campground facilities in the forest. About 200 young men were stationed at the Lone Pine Campground. It took them about three months to build the ten mile road to Whitney Portal, the trailhead to Mt. Whitney. Most of the material–sand, rock and timber–came from the area. This group also improved the trail to the top of 14,495-foot Mt. Whitney. Both Whitney Portal and the CCC boys were close to Father Crowley's heart. At this time he was paid as a part-time chaplain at $35 a month, a sum which helped a little in the poor parish budget. In 1936 he had a stone cabin built with the help of the stone mason, Steve Esteves, and his helper, Dobe Gunnarson, at Whitney Portal. It served as a cool refuge from the summer desert heat and a place of peaceful retreat for an overworked Padre. He had wanted it to be a place where his fellow priests could also get away to a "quiet place."

The *Central California Register*'s editor mourned when Father Crowley left Fresno since it meant the delightful yet instructive column "Frater Con" would no longer grace its pages. Father Crowley, too, missed the writing he so enjoyed. On August 12, 1934 his new column began in the *Register*, with the logo showing an old prospector sitting under a lone pine, with Mt. Whitney in the distance. The title read "Sage and Tumbleweed by Inyokel, some facts about the top of the United States and the bottom, Death Valley–and what lies in between!" In the lower left corner was: "Box 74-A Lone Pine, Inyo County, California." The design of the logo is believed to have been done by Father Crowley himself. These columns were to continue until the last published on March 22, 1940. Eventually the *Inyo Independent* got wind of these articles, until then only read by the Catholic subscribers, so they obtained permission to reprint them as of May 12, 1939. Father Crowley told the story of the birth of "Sage and Tumbleweed":

> *August 12, 1934.* The Padre came up the trail today having parked his Ford in the sagebrush near Lone Pine Canyon road. Few find their way to this old desert rat's nest in the red rocks of the Alabamas, so I speculated on the somehow familiar figure in khaki breeches and puttees swinging easily along my private labyrinth. When he spoke, I knew him. Ten years had slipped by since last he climbed to my eyrie and we had smoked a pipe together as we

watched the alpenglow on the tip of Cerro Gordo. There had been many priests here before, good men all, sent by those who govern such things to preach to us weatherbeaten sinners, baptize the little dusky Mejicanos, and pray and suffer in this cruel land. That this Padre was the first to return for more than a visit, "I asked to be allowed to come back, Inyokel," he began, using the sobriquet he had coined for me a decade ago, "and my Bishop was good enough to let me come. I know now how truly Mary Austin wrote of Inyo in her *Land of Little Rain*: 'if one is inclined to wonder at first how so many dwellers came to be in the loneliest land that ever came out of God's hands, what they do there, and why they stay, one does not wonder so much after living there. None other than this long brown land lays such a hold on the affections. The rainbow hills, the tender bluish mists, the luminous radiance of the spring have the lotus charm. They trick the sense of time, so that once inhabiting there you always mean to go away without quite realizing that you have not done it. Men who have lived there, miners and cattlemen, will tell you this, not so fluently, but emphatically, cursing the land and going back to it.' I stayed too long when first I came, Inyokel, and so I'm back." My hand went out and clasped his again in the grip of fellowship. I understood.

And so we came to sit once more on the natural armchairs of ruddy granite, upholstered with saddle blankets, that grace my portico. There were long stretches of conversation, mostly prompted by his questions, and longer silences, during which we both meditated upon the ways of God and men. At least I hope he thought about the ways of God. I know he ejaculated, "God rest them," again and again as we called the roll of those who had been laid in the little graveyard beyond the town. It seemed to me that a wistful look crept into his eyes as he murmured, "And old Mrs. Olivas and Angel Duarte too."

We deplored the passing of the Lone Pine we used to know, where every shack of weathered siding and tar-paper was hidden in a bower of hollyhock and honeysuckle and purpling grapes, but where now the gaudy neon signs, and the stench of auto exhausts proclaim that the years and the pavement have brought the city to the *Pueblo de las Uvas*. But we invariably reverted to silence when we chanced to mention one who had sold his ranch or home to "The City," or when I pointed out a vanished "farm" still limned by skeletons of trees, "Bare, ruined choirs, where late the sweet birds sang." 'Tis just another chapter in the history of Inyo, Inyokel," he concluded. "God only knows what her future will be, but for us there is nothing to do but to carry on. St. Charles Borromeo used to say that 'one soul is enough for a diocese,' and as long as there are souls in Inyo a priest must be in their midst to offer sacrifice, to christen and shrive, to marry and to bury. What you and I may feel matters naught–the soul of the tourist, the packer, the service station attendant, and the hotel clerk are as precious to Almighty

God as if the bodies in which they dwell were swinging a single-jack, curling a riata, or following a plow." Then he suddenly added, "I wish you would do it." "Do what?" I asked, removing my pipe and preparing to refill it. "Write a little bit every week about Inyo, her story, her"–I dropped my tobacco can. He chuckled. "But I mean it. You know Inyo, and you can tell a tale well. Why do you think I called you Inyokel so long ago? Because, bumpkin that you are, you personify Inyo to me. Under your sometimes outlandish but unquenchable humor you hide a wealth of those riches that all men seek, the nuggets of wisdom. Such to me is Inyo. Beneath the harsh laughter of her desertness, the unending necromancy of her contrasts, there lies much that men have loved and fought and died for. And by that I do not mean mere gold. The world knows all about Death Valley Scotty. Tell it about the heroism of Manly, who named that sink of dread, and of Mrs. Brier of the forty-niners and Mrs. McGuire of Haiwee. Write, as you can, of the inferno of our wastelands, but add that you have lain in our mountain meadows in beds of columbine and scarlet gentian and Queen Anne's lace. Tell them–" I got up courage enough to stop him. "But what business have I writing? Look at these calloused paws. A pencil–" "Exactly," he broke in, "that's it. Tell the world how your paws became calloused. Tell them of Ballarat and Greenwater and Skidoo. Lift the curtain on Cerro Gordo, where they 'had a dead man for breakfast every morning.' Don't worry about your spelling. I'll help you with that, and cross your t's and dot your i's."

"And what would your Riverince call the mulligan that you expect this hard-rock man to turn out week after week for your good pleasure?" It was a stall, as I was sparring for time. But I had the wrong man. He knew all the answers. "Sage and Tumbleweed", he countered quick as a flash. "Sage, because it covers most of Inyo; sage, because it seems to this poor listener that there is a touch of the sage about you, Inyokel. In your apparently aimless knocking on the outcroppings you occasionally hit a paystreak. And to allow for the other and larger part of your nature, add the tumbleweed, that species of amaranthus that, when dry, is uprooted by the wind and dances about the countryside, pausing at someone's line fence till the next breeze sends it tumbling and pirouetting o'er the waste, a clown of the desert. That's you, Inyokel, sage and tumbleweed, savant and mountebank!" "I'll think it over," I murmured. There was nothing else I could say.

"And if you want a story that breathes of Inyo," he ended, pointing to the silvered shafts of sunlight from behind Williamson as the signal for his departure, relate what happened to me at one of my missions on the first visit. I found a likely looking lad ready to serve my Mass. "Do you know the Latin?" I asked. 'Naw,' came the prompt rejoinder. 'I just pack the book around and feed you the wine and water and stuff.'"

Week after week the readers of the *Central California Register*

eagerly awaited their copy to see what Inyokel had to offer them this week. A few short weeks later he wrote in reaction to his readers many inquiries:

September 2, 1934. For the peace of soul of some of those correspondents who have tried to lift the veil on Box 74A, may we say that the cut atop this column was not furnished by the makers of a famous flapjack flour. While we want our friends to "look for the miner" in their Catholic paper, let us assure them that the ingredients of this weekly batter come out of no one package. They are the scraps and leavings of an old man's message, and not always in the same proportions. If the dish smacks occasionally more of salt than of sugar, kind friends, forebear! Dimming eyes, gnarled fingers and a lean larder have done their best.

Yes, the mountains behind are the artist's conception of Mount Whitney, the cap of Columbia, beetling above our rocky retreat. Whitney, which from here appears lower than nearer prominences, is distinguished by the twin pinnacles that guard it on the south, like petals that have begun to curl from the heart of a rose. The tree in the foreground is symbolic of our post office address, for the town of Lone Pine was named from the solitary pine tree that stood for years on the flat behind the settlement. The belfry in the corner is familiar to farers on the Sierra highway, for it is the tower of our little Santa Rosa chapel. As for the pensive yokel, I have had worse pictures taken.

To other inquirers he responded:

September 9, 1934. A reader writes from San Francisco, where this *olla podrida* appears once a month in the *Monitor*, and tells us that he is "one of many thousands who eagerly await your next 'Sage and Tumbleweed.'" Now, now: If a son of the Land of Lost Borders had spoken thus we would not be disturbed, for we have drunk of the river Hassayampa, of which if a man partake he can never more see things as other men, for romance has taken possession of his soul. But I thank J.P.G. and others who have cheered us, even though the decimal point in the total of our readers be moved a few places to the left. We must tell you what the Padre remarked when I told him that the *Tidings*, which, in company with the *Central California Register*, had been printing us weekly, dropped the column without any explanation. "Evidently, Inyokel," he smiled, "somebody must have read it."

Two of the gentle persuasion have asked what "Inyokel" means. Mesdames, it signifies nothing more nor less than a yokel from Inyo, with the accent on the O! And to that distinguished M.D. who questioned the existence of a scarlet gentian, my apology. I meant the scarlet gilia. But the thought of a physician or two puncturing this column occasionally sends icy spiders down my spine.

He answered readers' inquiries on where he got his ideas, with his own frustrations on not being able to do more and a plea for understanding:

> *April 11, 1937.* Stories? Every desert man has a fund of them. And, if he has none, he is one. Even the barrenest landscape may hide a Golconda, and behind the inhospitable, rheumy-eyed, tobacco-stained porch-sitter may lie a vein of untapped wealth of folklore and imagery. Frequently, it may be uncovered by the proper approach; often, too, it must be gathered from his cronies and fortified by personal observation of the subject. If one type suspects that you are a writing man, he will unfold like a primrose at sunset–for he is a natural front-pager–while another species pulls in his head like a turtle if he dreams that aught he says will find its way into print. So the practiced columnist or gatherer of radio material soon develops a poker face, and slyly fills his pouch with sweets for future distillation while pretending to be asking only those innocent questions that come under the head of passing the time of day, or making conversation. He never produces a pencil or any of the instruments of his trade, lest it frightens his quarry. He must trust his memory for all, for a return for a refreshment of names, etc., would be fatal.
>
> My dream, so far unfulfilled, is to move in with one of these old tumbleweeds in his lean-to, or just next door against the ledge, for a week or two, and drain him dry of all the newsworthy material that has settled in his innards for a generation. Then I would move on to the next shack, perhaps a hundred miles away, stopping perhaps to look for sheep tracks or early mariposas. In this way, most of the existing volumes on this region came into being. But, alack and so forth, I must be content with the gleanings of an hour, or the fleeting glance, for it seems to be my lot to be forever up and away. If these jottings reflect this nomad's life of mine, I crave your pardon, kind sirs, and refer you to the title.

A sign that Inyokel was never at a loss for topics is demonstrated in the following column which appealed especially to his non-Catholic readers as all could identify with the problem:

> *October 2, 1938.* Memory serveth me not as to the date of the coming of that abomination of abominations, the paper napkin. I am inclined to believe that its advent was insidious; in fact,I would not be surprised if some future delver into the causes of the downfall of our civilization does not find that the paper napkin evolved from the paper doily. Do you recall them, those circular or ovate bagatelles which you were supposed to place at the exact spot–nor were you ever discouraged by previous failures–at the exact spot on the varnished table top where the guest was supposed to set down his glass? And which pretties came in great stacks from the ten cent store, fitted so snugly into each other that no matter how thin you sliced them

you still wasted half a dozen on each customer, a sly trick of the rapacious paper manufacturer?

Well, it strikes me that in an evil day the aforesaid r.p.m. caught some yokel eating corn with his fingers and surreptitiously wiping his chops with a doily, and lo, the paper napkin was born! Be that as it may, the wood pulp serviette is with us, in conical vases where their triangular folds forever tempt me to shy them across the restaurant, airplane fashion; or in mechanical traps that snap at your fingers or force you to spill salt and ketchup as you struggle for a sample; or worst of all, a solitary specimen lies beside your plate to serve for the entire meal, come what may. And what is the nation doing about it? In the age of weeks for this and that, why not a week for bigger and better napkins? And if America goes wild about a lad who sets down his plane in Ireland by flying the wrong way, why should she not do the same for the burly lunch counter patron who volplanes his slopping gravy on to one of these infinitesimal wisps of white on an ocean of lap?

Bear with me, patient peruser, while I depict for you a scene that is all too true to life. A son of the desert climbs on a stool in one of our roadside dispensers of food for wayfarers. His calloused hands spell toil, his appreciative eye denotes a ready appetite. From the "Entrees indicate price of the meal" he orders roast beef, which includes green corn, soup, salad and jelly. While he waits he tucks a napkin in his shirtfront and drinks a glass of water. He spills a drop or two and reaches for the napkin. It isn't there. The electric fan has blown it under the fourth seat south. He climbs down and retrieves it. Soup's on, so he sets to work. It is a wee bit hot, so he gulps and spatters a little on the counter. Again he reaches for the napkin. This time it has flown north; somebody has just come in and the draught carried it off. Again the descent, the search, and the return to his perch. The counter-drying process reduces the paper to a wet sop. What shall he do with it? At first he palms it, no difficult task, and reaches for another. Foolishly he tucks it in the old familiar place. When he is ready to remove the marks of the soup from his lips the will o' the wisp has been wafted under the feet of a departing truck-driver. So he coaxes another from the snare in front of him and wipes his mouth. Another limp and greasy bundle results. He cannot palm two of them, so he slips it in his pocket. Thus it goes on. His pockets bulge and he begins to set the surplus tissue around his plate. At meal's end the counter looks like Broadway after a Corrigan welcome, the floor is tesselated with dainty panels of white, pink, or green, as the case may be, and the exhausted traveler goes forth unwiped, unmannered, and unstrung. Must these things be? Is there no justice? Lest I be accused of purely destructive criticism I here and now bind myself to the following contract to help bring the tyranny of the r.p.m.'s (Cf.par.2) to an end. I will award a free subscription to the *Register* to the reader who shall first send me a paper napkin large enough for a man to wipe his hands on, same to be

accompanied by a signed statement as to the location of eating place from which it was removed (hospitals not included). There is also a year's subscription awaiting the ingenious soul, clergy not excepted, who shall send Inyokel the first detailed description, plan or sample of a non-skid paper napkin that shall forever banish the blind gropings of the present era, and permit us to rise up as we sat down, our breeks unprofaned by a beer. (Laundry journals please copy.)

Shortly after Inyokel received some responses to his request:

January 28, 1940. Having reverted to the subject of paper napkins above, passing mention is due here of the response to my appeal for bigger and better serviettes, and my promise of a free subscription to the sender of a paper napkin big enough for a man to wipe his hands on. Jack and Marjorie Bullinger sent me a fancy colored example from the Green Apple Pie in Seattle some time back, and honesty compelled me to put them on the mailing list. Another 20-incher has come in this week from Mrs. Stowe of Fresno, who gives the States Grill in Coalinga as the restaurant that is contributing to the sanity of the nation by keeping its patrons from reaching for the little paper that isn't there. She too has received her reward. And from Jess Hession, may his tribe increase, assistant state attorney-general at Sacramento, this very day comes a two-foot square of tissue that would gladden the heart of a lumberjack. The Sutter Club at Sacramento is the dispenser, and, putting Jess on our free list we hereby close the contest and hold this quarter-section of absorbency aloft to confute those scoffers who jeer, "Can anything good come out of Sacramento?"

This topic of paper napkins brought results other than those mentioned above, as noted by the *Register* after his death: "So when on occasion paragraph followed paragraph without mention of aught spiritual, some of us may have wondered what was the purpose of it all. It was the bait. It landed them,–big ones, too, or do you remember the incident of the paper napkins, the elusive, errant, wandering paper napkins. We can still see the Padre reaching for another paper napkin and laughing: 'Drat that thing!' (He would never use a paper napkin at home. They were just too much akin to the tumbleweed.) At any rate a gentleman read the column on paper napkins, and took it home to his wife. The lady, apathetic at first, was soon in convulsions, and startled hubby with the cry of 'Author!' The man found his way to the inner circle, and taking a reef in his courage, straggled home to inform his lady fair that the author was a Catholic priest. Then he waited for the fireworks. The lady who was far from being a Catholic was stunned, for she had always figured a Catholic priest was an individual who would sour milk at a

glance. Her husband, faint heart, took courage, taking up his religion where he had left it off. Yes, he was once again a Catholic,–this time a good one and his wife soon followed suit. This is what paper napkins properly handled, did for that lady and gentleman."[49]

Inyokel was proud of his work and was not above showing his sensitivity to criticisms or his impatience at printing errors which sometimes crept into his columns, but he managed to express it in a captivating manner:

October 14, 1934. Printers make me say things in print and out of it, that should not be said. My hard-earned simile of a heart on the heights sounding like a "woodpecker sinking for coy grubs" became, in cold type, a "woodpecker 'singing.'" Only a printer could make a woodpecker sing.

And the groves of tamarisks at Keeler once mentioned here were called by this pen "green oases." But they returned to us as "green 'cases.'" True, either could be considered as a place of refreshment in the desert. So, dear reader, if you should find a rare bit of humor in this corner some time, haste not to give us credit. It may be the printer.

And again:

September 16, 1934. I should have avoided foreign entanglements, but I had long waited for the opportunity to describe my lean-to kitchen by the French word *menage*. But the printer humbled me two weeks ago by converting it into "message." And if there is one word that gives me gooseflesh, it is that same. Whatever my sins may be, I hope I am never ushered in as "a man with a message." But I should consider myself fortunate. A California Catholic paper recently carried a story about the donation of jams and jellies to an orphanage. By the merest chance the proofreader caught the story as the press was starting. The heading ran: "Friends of Orphans Donate Jams and Bellies."

And in another column he complained:

July 3, 1938. From time to time I hear from readers who find fault with statements of fact herein. Thus Billy Voreyer, who with John Byrne and Richard Senteno found themselves famous on their return from Huntington Lake and Santa Teresita, reminded me that his dad is William, not Charles. The boy should know. Then a gentleman who travels a bit writes that a glance at *Scrugham's History of Nevada* would have set me right on the origin of the name of the Virgin River. It was not, as I said, dedicated to the Mother of God, whose place is in Holy Sion, but received its title from the murder of a Negro named Virgin upon its bank. I have no copy of Congressman Scrugham's work at hand, so I am not prepared to argue the point on historical grounds. But surely there are other cogent reasons why no man should be allowed to rip a paragraph apart, much less send a column top-

pling. Hours of sawing out of the dun stone of the commonplace, hours of monotonous and desperate polishing, exquisite care in fitting stone on stone so that no joint may show and the beholder is content to accept the resplendent pillar as a monolith, then some idle baker of mud pies glances at it and says, "Fine. Only you've got it upside down!" Why must such people exist, the tearer-downers, the wet-blanketeers, the "I-heard-it-before" deflaters? This is the type that sits behind you at the movies as you perch on the edge of your seat and watch Square Shootin' Dick race up to the camera, his horse in a lather; leap from the saddle and throw the villain with the same motion, and dash up the court house steps to file his claim in the nick of time. The helpful patron behind will interject, "That's just soap-suds on the horse. And it's only on one side. I saw them take the picture at 7th and Broadway." If there is a need for such balloon-prickers, and there must be, for they are ever with us, I bow my head and take the correction. Into each life some rain must fall. So all right, my fine friend, I accept your unromantic fussiness. But may you never know the grief of seeing one of the favored children of your brain die in your arms, stabbed by an unimaginative Brutus.

And in response to his alert readers, he felt obliged to defend himself thus:

December 19, 1937. The Padre preaches forgiveness and forgetfulness of injuries, but he has never had a child of his slaughtered and laid out before him, cold in death, upon a sheet of newspaper. It was a year ago that I cooked up a cute little nifty for a Christmas message, dragging into the picture three correspondents' comments upon the column. Taking my cue from the season, Christmas, I concluded with the words of the carol, "God rest ye merry, gentlemen!" My plum pudding turned suddenly sour when I found that somebody had slipped the comma up a notch, so that it ran, "God rest ye, merry gentlemen," which was neither what I meant nor what Webster (there's that man again) gives as the connotation of the expression, "God rest ye merry."

Yet, when it is remembered that both this bouillabaisse and the setting of it in type and the proofreading and the printing and the return to California from Denver are done at top speed and literally under high pressure, it is a marvel that so few errors, or substitutions, occur. To the unsuspecting editor or proofreader who has read thus far my apology for miscues, it must seem by now that I have been rather cowardly about the whole business. For he knows, and deep in my heart I know, that it is his vigilance that keeps this column legible at all, for some of the weird transpositions of type that this amateur can accomplish on his machine require a Philo Vance and a Job to get them before the public. Honestly, I would never have said a word if it was not for those "swappers." [instead of "swampers."] Folks

hereabouts got to calling me "a city guy," "a cake-eater," and "a tourist." No man is obliged to stand for that.

There is just one other thing. One time I wrote that the Padre had comforted Mrs. Ruth Cornwall Woodman, writer of *Death Valley Days*, frightened by the steep ascent to Whitney Portal, by a quick riposte. She had turned to him as he spun the car up the grade and pleaded, "Padre, please remember that I have two little children at home." And he countered, "That's nothing. The whole county calls me 'Father'." But when he read it in the *Register* "county" had become "country." So when we met he chided me gently, adding, "After all, Inyokel, I am not George Washington."

He answered readers queries in the following fashion:

December 29, 1935. Someone has asked: "How do you find material for a column every week?" The answer is: "I don't." But in an hour I can dig up enough to supply several weeks if I meet the right man or am catapulted into the proper situation. No scribbler, however jejune, can turn out a weekly dot for five years, without developing a sixth sense for news, a certain awareness that slumbers at the doorstep of his subconscious mind and pricks up its ears at the first football of a story. Nor is this apparent to his companions in situations or society that conceals a tale. They are usually oblivious of the fact that he is taking mental notes and that his apparently polite questions have a deep and sinister purpose. Ruth Cornwall, the clever lady who writes *Death Valley Days* for the radio, never takes a note while she is "visiting" the old desert rats whom she brings to life on the air for half America. To draw out pencil and paper would cramp their style, and some of the choicest and most colorful descriptions are those to which the innocent old-timer is gently egged on by the skill of the listener.

Columns, too, like Topsy, just grow. Through the months and the years, impressions impinge themselves upon your consciousness, like tin cans thrown against a fence. One day, you awake to the fact that quite a pile has accumulated and you proceed to remove them, i.e., put them into print, and you have a lot of fun reading the labels and recalling the occasions that they enlivened. Frequently, you will sit at the typewriter and exclaim in desperation: "I don't know where this will lead, but, in the name of the Lord, here goes." And to your amazement, and often to your readers' delight, this hopeless start drags forth from the recesses of your memory a charming sequence of related incidents, like a string of sausages. Such as this has been. And this, dear friends, is all there is to columning.

The columns had the effect of considerably increasing the number of subscribers to the newspaper, which gladdened the heart of its editor in 1937. He was none other than his good friend, Harry Clinch, who had been ordained in 1936. He was not about to reveal to the world just

who this Inyokel was who seemed to be everywhere the Padre went. No doubt, the Padre enjoyed the trickery and the fun of the whole experience. The Irish leprechauns would have been proud of him! This incognito role fitted the Padre's modesty, but also gave him a chance to open his heart and feelings without being too obviously sentimental. The writings provided him with an avenue to express his mischievous side, or to present both sides of a debated issue. He responded to compliments with characteristic modesty:

> *June 30, 1938.* Why I should next ask myself what the theme of this week's column should be, I do not know. But I remembered two comments that reached my desk in the past fortnight. A reader embarrassed me, and the Padre added to my shame by lifting his eyebrows when he read it, in writing that she "finds much spiritual help in 'Sage and Tumbleweed'." I am afraid it's the environment, Miss. You find this catch-all in the Register, sandwiched between Catholic doctrine and Catholic doings, and you imagine this corner is elevating, too. Alas, if you were to lift it, like the glistening mica at the bottom of a pool, from its surroundings, you would find it flat, stale, and unprofitable, But thanks anyway.

There were a few weeks each year when his column did not appear as he was on vacation or retreat. Whenever it did not appear, his readers noticed the lapse:

> *October 18, 1936.* After six weeks–or was it two months?–of scanning this page for "Sage and Tumbleweed," a lady has written to inquire after my good health. A gentleman told me yesterday that he now reads the Register from the front page in the normal fashion, instead of from the rear, as formerly. In the face of this extraordinary turn of affairs, and overwhelmed by the above-mentioned popular demand, I must bow to the will of the people and peck out a few words a week for a little longer. "The public be served," is my motto, *coute que coute.* That last phrase is French, or used to be. It means "Cost what it may."

And:

> *June 7, 1936.* Which brings to mind an unsuspected reader who brought blushes beneath our stubble this week by writing of "the pleasure I have found in reading "Sage and Tumbleweed." Your attitude toward the National Park Service and your support of the Service are very much appreciated. I hope that if at any time there is anything about which you cannot write with encomiums in the *Register*, you will let me know so that remedial action may be taken. With all appreciation of your column–John R. White, Superintendent, Sequoia National Park." Thanks, Colonel. Handsome is as handsome does, and I feel that I have not passed the bounds of truth in my

poor acknowledgment of the efforts of the Service to render the wonders of California more accessible and yet preserve them from despoliation. Experience has taught me that the traveling public appreciates but slightly and thanks less the men who have had the vision to plan and the devotion to do the great task of keeping God's handiwork unsullied for all time.

And now another compliment:

December 27, 1936. Father O'Shea writes from Tehachapi that the inmates of the women's prison there are among my constant readers. Perfectly understandable, Father. Why should not the wide, open spaces appeal to the dear ladies?

Another expressed his disappointment:

December 27. 1936. A district attorney in no mean city writes: "You know how you feel when you turn the page and see 'to be continued?' Well, that's the way I feel about your articles, and speaking for the 'war department'–she being of the Catholic faith–that's how I come to get your paper. She gets very riled up when you don't appear in an issue, and she is not alone in this respect, for the feeling extends to several of the neighbors..."

Within the week a gentleman whose fingers are also ink-stained deflated my swelling ego with his rapier: "Have been reading your stuff of late, and it strikes me as rather dry. Are you scratching in a dry wash?"

What a spot for a wizened old prospector, lonely in his mountain hideaway! When trains or planes fail to connect, and his weekly dab is not dished up on the *Register* platter, the district attorney's biscuits are burned, his coffee is cold, the scales of justice are unbalanced, and some poor devil is sent up for life for a mere murder! Yet when this side-dish at last finds place on the Catholic literary board, a writing man accuses me of having swung into the dry column! This, after a lifetime on the desert has taught me that water must be conserved for washing and cooking, and that thirst should be satisfied by other fluids, the lower the flash-point the better. Dry indeed!

Well, to adapt the carol appropriate to the season, "God Rest Ye, Merry Gentlemen," I shall "let nothing me dismay." Though you volley and thunder, I shall rap out my six hundred–or is it a thousand words? Is it on the pediment of the New York post office that a legend is carved apotheosizing the postmen, and running like this: "Not day nor night, nor summer sun, nor hail nor rain nor snow shall halt these couriers in their appointed rounds?" So, my masters, wet or dry, Inyokel plans still, God willing, to stay a few rounds in the Catholic press preliminary bouts.

A newspaper editor, probably unaware that Inyokel was a priest, writing for a Catholic paper, complained:

October 10, 1937. A secular newspaper editor once told me, "If you would cut that religious stuff, I'd run your column in my paper." The compliment was sincere, the reasoning as fallacious as that which supposes that you can truly educate a man in a school which omits all mention of God and his place in the universe. When a man writes, he writes himself, his hopes and his fears, his loves and his weaknesses, his whole philosophy. If he writes not thus he is not worth the reading, nor will he have readers long. Even an enemy must find whereon to batten his hate, and the milk-and-water scrivener or preacher has no enemies. Because he has no friends.

His columns were reprinted in the local papers and he noted his appreciation to two men who were energetic co-workers with him in his efforts for Owens Valley. However, he did not omit this opportunity to get in a few digs at his friend, George Savage:

June 11, 1939. Both George Savage and Will Chalfant, editors of the *Lone Pine Progress-Citizen, The Inyo Independent*, and the *Inyo Register*, have been magnanimous enough to incorporate this column in their respective papers as a regular feature. Inyokel feels now like the high school valedictorian who has been caught by his little sister rehearsing his speech before the mirror. It is easy enough to write for distant readers, with only a chance in a million of ever meeting one of them. But to have the family looking over your shoulder while you try to strut your stuff, Gawsh! I suppose I should say "Thank you, Bill," and "Thank you, George." But to all these new readers, "Please don't titter. After all this five-year old tower of babble was not planned for the multitude, but only as a weekly report on California east of Whitney for the *Central California Register*, the official organ of the Catholic Church in Central California. So if my good Protestant, Masonic publisher friends have decided after half a decade that their subscribers can be safely exposed to Inyokel's mouthings, let your maledictions, benedictions (cross out one) rest upon their heads. They asked for it."

For five years also have I watched the aforementioned publishing house of Savage and French print "narrow-gauge" and "broad gauge" with the "u" before the "a". Knowing something about gages, I felt that I should beard the editor in his den and point out that he had wrecked several trains of thought on the switch of letters in his line. But what was it to me? I was only one reader. And besides, perhaps the new deal, in spelling as in legislation, was to put "A" in second place, and "You" first. But when "Sage and Tumbleweed," as it did last week, mentions such things as gauges broad and narrow, and they too become transposed, I knew the time had come for me to explain that when the railroad left me it was as Webster would have it. For this week I must use the word again, willy-nilly. And I have no fear that the *Independent's* editor will not publish this chiding, for he is broad-gauge.

As to Inyokel's identity, Father Crowley had great fun responding to the inquiries:

July 24, 1938. From a town on the coast writes a lady: "For a year and a half I have been intending to write to tell you how much I enjoy "Sage and Tumbleweed" in the *Register* of this diocese. Due to an argument between Sister_____, of nearby_____, and myself, I would like to know your identity. To be sure of an answer, I have taken the precaution to send a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Will you please answer the following questions? Are you a lay writer or a member of the clergy? If you are the former, who is the 'Padre' of whom you speak so much? Should you be the latter, are you referring to yourself in the third person? Begging your pardon for my undue curiosity, I pray that God's blessings and graces may descend abundantly upon you.

P.S. An afterthought. Sister_____said you were Monsignor Crowley (heaven forbid!), while I took the stand that you were a lay writer."

Thank you, ma'am, for them kind words. Blessings are needed in these parts, and I often wish that some of that oil which dripped from the beard of Aaron would fall on my typewriter. But this identity business is a poser. When I began to read your letter I was certain of myself. Now I am not so sure. "If you are a priest, who is the Padre? If you are the Padre, who is Inyokel? And if you are Monsignor Crowley, heaven forbid!" Madam, I AM Inyokel. And when the Padre and I linked arms just now and looked in the mirror to see how anybody could take us for a Papal Chamberlain, I chuckled, "If the Monsignor knew this he would take it as a reflection." Which heaven forbid! So set your mind at rest, for I doubt whether the empurpled cleric in question is half as enthusiastic as you are about this column. At least, he has never written me about it. P.S. May I keep the stamp?

In the diocesan subscription drive for the *Central California Register*, Lone Pine parish came out on top of all the others in exceeding its quota–no doubt due to the popularity of "Sage and Tumbleweed" and the Padre's efforts at publicizing the newspaper. The Bishop had organized Catholic Evidence Guilds in all the parishes and appointed leaders of the community on each one. He noted one volunteer, a former prospector, who did his best in the Death Valley area:

November 27, 1938. So Inyokel has wherefore to be thankful. He is thankful that America is not Fascist. He is grateful that America is not Communist. He is happy that Inyoites appreciate the *Register*, a good antidote for both "isms." And he does not consider it out of place to add here Johnny Mills' fervent thanks when he learned the significance of the card from Bishop Scher appointing him on the local Catholic Evidence Committee.

"It means that the Bishop expects you to help secure readers for the *Register*, Johnny, and to assist in any other special task he may later assign, such as combatting misinformation by answering it with the truth, etc." "Oh, if that's all, that's O.K.," grinned the old desert rat. "I was afraid it might mean he wanted me to be a priest or something. And I don't want everybody around here calling me 'Father'."

He was widely read and admired other newspaper reporters and writers. One of the most popular reporters in the thirties was Harry Carr of the *Los Angeles Times*. When he died in 1936 Inyokel praised the fellow journalist:

January 26, 1936. Harry Carr is dead. "The Lancer" will saunter forth no more to puncture bombast, tilt with windmills, and gallop down the wind beneath the streaming gonfalons of regal Spain. Our fellow columnist was fearless of those in high places and loved the simpler ways, those of the Indian and the Mexican. His errant quest led him into assorted places. He was the confidant of Chinese insurrectors and Japanese shoguns, and he had a room set aside for him over the old jail that he had restored at Mission San Juan Bautista. He was a figure in Hollywood, yet was merciless in his comment upon the domestic infelicities of moviedom. He deprecated with equal fervor any mention of Mussolini or the Dionne quintuplets, while his praise for the Apache and Paiute amounted to adulation. An author of several worthwhile books, he was kind enough to tell me he liked this sage-scented column. He was a man of many contrasts; we loved him for his candor. He called himself "The Lancer," but he wore no armor.

He traveled the Orient and came to know it and its potential influence upon civilization as few have done. Harry Chandler, publisher of the *Times*, who had paid Harry's expenses on these safaris, asked him once what was the most interesting spot he had ever visited. Carr replied, "Los Angeles."

"Then, hereafter I'll buy you a few street car tickets and save myself a lot of money," was his employer's retort.

It was true that Harry worshiped Los Angeles with a passionate devotion. In an earlier day, he even found excuse for the Owens Valley tragedy, but his last book, *Los Angeles*, contains his frank admission of the wrong done Inyo. He lived here once in a little cottage a stone's throw from this typewriter, and he had planned to come here again this winter before the Great Compositor set "Thirty" under his name. The last paragraph he ever wrote began–"Death cuts down the famous by threes in Hollywood–Thelma Todd, John Gilbert, and *Quien Sabe*? And who knows?" God knew, and He filled in the blank with the writer's name that very day. What a commentary on the uncertainty of life! With Father Caffrey, who preached over your body, and your beloved Padres at the Plaza, who sang for your soul, Inyokel prays: *Vaya con Dios!*

Father Crowley considered himself to be not only a pastor of the local Catholic churches but also a member of the local community, especially of Lone Pine where he had his principal residence. His goal was to serve his parishioners but, at the same time, serve the entire Owens Valley since all its residents were so closely linked with social and economic ties. As time went on he conceived various projects that served both as fund raisers and as a means of participation for all the town folk.

One of these projects was to rent out empty "apartments" at the parish rectory. These were built with the hope that at some date in the future they would be merged into a parish Catholic school. At different times it became the home of a dentist, Dr. Frank Derrick; a doctor and good friend, Dr. Howard Dueker and his wife Claire, a nurse; Newton and Jean Price, school teachers. Jean Price reports that at first before she married, she and another teacher, Marjorie Flint, had been living at the Dow Hotel next door to the church then moved into one apartment when the dentist moved out. When she married, Marjorie Flint moved out and the Prices stayed in the apartment for a year. She recalls that their quarters were right next to Father Crowley's. Although not Catholics, they were very pleased with their landlord. "He was lovely, wonderful and loved to be with people and have fun," she commented.

Claire Dueker remembers that "Padre was indeed a saint, and a dear friend. He took us under his wing. Duke (26 yrs, Dr. Howard W. Dueker) had agreed to taking care of an older physician's practice, while the old boy (42 yrs) recovered from a ruptured appendix. All was well, until the doctor decided he wanted to sell his practice. Duke didn't want to buy. He was hoping to get a surgical residency. 'Bubble and boil'–small town crisis.

"Enter Padre, he volunteered to make an office and living quarters for us in the rectory. He also made offices for a lawyer, a dentist and a mortuary in the basement. He was fond of saying one could arrange for birth to death in the Santa Rosa quarters.

"I went to Lone Pine a 22 year old bride accustomed to living in L.A. My first meeting with Father Crowley came late one evening in a snow storm. He came to the door of our office-home combination and asked if Duke would please go to Panamint Springs with him. He had a very sick friend, (Ralph Merritt) visiting a Helen Gunn at the Minnietta Mine. Off they went–Padre in leather puttees, and a leather jacket concealing his collar.

"Early the next morning a neighbor called to ask where the 'Doctor' had gone, to be out all night (if you want to know–ask).

"I told her he had gone to the Panamints with a 'Padre' or something,

driving. Her only comment was 'my dear, I'll pray for you.' Comforting! She relates that the Padre often said : 'Saint Christopher got out at 50 miles an hour.'

"Padre and Duke were very close friends. Often, stayed up half the night discussing politics, religion etc. Those were fun years. Padre had a contagious laugh–a joy to hear. He was very fond of children and dogs... ...As I say, I could go on and on–we lived in our cozy nest–Santa Rosa four years."[50]

Mat Perez remembers his brother learning to box in the parish basement. The program was sponsored by the parish Catholic Youth Organization and local parishioners were the coaches. Later his brother went on to become a professional boxer. Dances were held in the parish hall, and at times it was used as an art studio for local free-lance artists.

Herman Berg wrote in 1935:

"George started to work this morning. George [Thompson] is the local carpenter who does Father's building work. Father has made a deal to lease part of the hall basement to an undertaker from Bishop for his occasional use, and George is building the partitions, doors, etc. The Monsignor would be a credit to any large corporation as a promoter, or in many other capacities. He bought the lumber from an old dismantled house, and these will go into the mortuary."[51]

The vacant lot next to the church was also church property and was rented to the Texaco gas station. It appears that the Bishop did not quite approve of this unorthodox use of parish or diocesan funds and property that were not directly related to functions of the Catholic Church.

The old Santa Rosa Church was then located on Main Street in Lone Pine next to the Dow Hotel, and across from Ellis Motors Garage and the Mt. Whitney Cafe. Father Crowley described the night of a fire in Lone Pine:

> *April 12, 1936.* Rotund Otto Renner rolled over lazily, like a boulder in a river bed, and snapped on the radio. "Suptter-r- gr—r awk-k. This is station KSL, Salt Lake City. The town of Lone Pine, Calif. was almost destroyed by fire last night in a blaze which caused $50,000 damage. The members of the cast of *The Charge of the Light Brigade* starring Errol Flynn, now on location in that town, battled heroically with the flames... ." "Huh, what's that? Lone Pine? They are crazy! Maybe it is some other Lone Pine" quoth Otto forthwith to his beldame as he bounced out of bed and lifted the shade. "Golly, no, it is us, all right. Look at the smoke!" In this fashion did Otto, who lived but two blocks from the restaurant and garage that had burned to the ground, and whose home had been showered through the night with embers borne by the north wind, learn the local news.

A fire in a small town is like a birth or a funeral. It is everybody's business. There are no uniformed smoke-eaters to sit about the firehouse and crochet or play penny ante until the alarm rings and then race hell-bent to smother the blaze in that first all-important five minutes. No, some late-returning traveler or neighbor spots a wisp of flame and gallops to the siren on Pete Aigner's old garage and throws the switch. Instantly, all those dwelling in the north end of town, if the wind is from the south, start tucking their night clothes into whatever outer garments are accepted as fashionable for a midnight sortie by their respective sexes and start for the bright spot. If the wind is from the north, as it was that night a week ago, those at the south end are first to respond. At our latest holocaust, the driver of the firetruck, by day an auto mechanic who sleeps at the northern end of the village, heard none of the bruit for 20 minutes after the rest of us. But it is only months since we secured a truck, and, in the old days, we would seize the two-wheeled hose reel and clatter away. But at the fire the procedure has not changed. Every man is an amateur fireman, and many a secret ambition is fulfilled when he is at last permitted to get his hands on a hose or dash into the smoke and emerge with a frying pan or a worn tire.

I spotted the dentist and the Padre silhouetted against the glow as they skated over the shingles on the church roof. "Skated" is the word, for the water that they had managed to spread up there with a garden hose froze quickly, both upon the roof and upon themselves, so that they had to resort to hand and foot work to stifle the sparks. The priest was not caparisoned in correct clerical costume, but then the white garment I discovered trailing behind me in the breeze was not my handkerchief either.

Actors who had received their lancer's uniforms from the wardrobe department a few hours before, all cleaned and pressed, ready to go on location at dawn, now stood with them bundled under their arms, their hastily-packed suitcases by their sides, for the hotel had been evacuated. Lights had gone out, and the hotel lobby was illuminated by candles set in candelabra from the church next door. One woman started for Los Angeles afoot, her grips in her hands. Two sisters in one family tried to coax their mother, a lady of no mean dimensions who was wandering around with a handbag, and wearing a resurrected hat, to climb into a borrowed coupe with them and start South. Failing, principally for lack of space, the young ladies went on alone, stopping some ten miles away when they found the gas running low. From there, they could still see the blaze, so they drove into a depression in the highway where the glow in the sky was not so apparent, parked the car, and turned on the radio.

Piles of clothing and furniture began to appear under trees and on sidewalks as the flames mounted. An erstwhile sensible housewife went forth into the night with two small suitcases. After the furor had subsided, she opened them and found one filled with dress patterns, the other empty.

Her daughter spent the evening walking through the crowd with a floor lamp in one hand, a portable sewing machine in the other. Someone had handed them to her as they salvaged a neighbor's chattels, but she had no consciousness of either their weight or her possession of them until a lame back brought it home to her next day.

Two hundred and fifty lunches prepared for the movie company to take out next morning supplied fuel for the restaurant blaze. Carpenters and a painter working on additions to the garage had left their tools there overnight. The painter, who had not heard the siren, reported for work in the morning. One of the carpenters was Reyes Carrasco, who lost both tools and job by the conflagration. His daughter is in the hospital recuperating from injuries in the auto wreck that killed his wife's sister and nephew and two other citizens. His boy had entered the hospital that afternoon with flu. His father and mother had been buried together within the month. Three weeks ago, his uncle met instant death when his car turned over. Said his wife, as she looked at the smoking ruins: "Looks like we have to keep in the headlines." And yet there are some of us who complain because the toast is burned!

Perhaps his coverage of the fire helped the owners of the burned property since everyone in town pitched in to help, paid past-due bills and were generally supportive. Within a few months the two establishments were back in business, bigger and better than ever.

The idiosyncrasies and the foibles of his townspeople were also grist for Inyokel's mill. He noticed everything and turned the slightest incidents into spicy bits:

January 30, 1938. Home again, and I perceive that the new cocktail bar across the street from the church is about ready to open. It is located in a former garage building, and all the signs pertinent to that business have not yet been removed. So above the main entrance the legend runs, "Complete Lubrication."

January 12, 1936. A little, sweet-faced old lady sat in the lobby of the Kittie Lee Inn at Bishop all day, waiting for a friend who had promised to meet her. As she lounged, she saw visitors and guests stop from time to time to play the slot machine by the desk. Late in the afternoon, there being no one else in the lobby, she timidly approached Hugh Satterlee and asked him if she might try "that thing" once. She had never gambled before, she explained. Hugh changed her bill into small silver and she inserted a nickel. At the first plunge the plugs flew out so violently that they fell about her in a shower. "There," she shuddered,"I have broken it." She had won the jackpot. Thus was another led from the path of virtue to a life of iniquity. Ah, Huey!

May 24, 1936. Things are not always what they seem, however. Harry Dolan found that out recently. He complained to his wife and daughters that their talcum powder was not worth much. He had shaken some in his shoes because his feet had been troubling him, and, lo, when night came, he had to remove his feet from his socks before he could take off his brogans. The socks themselves had cemented themselves to the leather, "Oh that," laughed Pat–Patricia to you–"that's the powder the dentist gave me to hold my upper plate in place!"
March 8, 1936. Then there is a garden in town with circular flower beds rimmed with inverted blue Bromo-Seltzer bottles, scores of them. Garden of memories! What flowers? Oh, night-blooming cereus and morning glories, undoubtedly.

The joys and sorrows of the community were his and he shared them all in his columns. One tells of the death of Bob Carrasco, a well-loved local resident:

> *March 8, 1936.* Our village blacksmith is no more. Like the glow of the embers in his forge, the spark of life left the ashes of Bob Carrasco on Ash Wednesday morning. With him went much of the Lone Pine of yore, the *Pueblo de Las Uvas* of which Mary Austin wrote, where they "drink, and are merry, and look out for something to eat afterward; have children, nine or ten to a family; have cock fights, keep the siesta, smoke cigarettes, and wait for the sun to go down. And always they dance..." Only Bob had 12 children, and smoked cigars. And when he grew too old to dance, the movies came, and after them, the talkies. So Bob would tell Felicita that he would like to go to the show, and she would smile and say,"Go on, Bob," while she would sit at home and rock her grandchildren. Deaf though he had become, he often enjoyed two performances of an evening and seldom missed a night. He found there the fantasy and romance he had known in his youth.
>
> "My wife's in the next room," he told the Padre at the hospital, when the priest slipped into prepare him for his journey to God. He did not know that before they had carried him to his last bed they had taken away the body of this spouse of 46 years, his Felicita. Maybe the Padre meant "the next world" when he agreed with Bob, for we all knew the old man's hours were numbered. But, before he followed her 12 hours later, he assured the nurse: "My wife has gone." "Flu and heart," said the doctor. But we knew, and Annie Romero, who danced at their wedding, knew that they wanted to enter eternity hand in hand.
>
> The little vestibule was upholstered with flowers, and the two caskets, resting end to end, reached almost from the altar rail to the organ. Protestants and men of no Church wept with us of the household as the Padre reminded us that the day of the funeral was Bob's own birthday, his birthday into life eternal; and how Felicita and he had worked and prayed for the

coming of this little church a half century ago, when a priest visited here at intervals of two or three years. Then he asked us how many could go before our Judge at the end and point to 50 years of fidelity to our marriage vows, and 12 journeys into the valley of death to bring a child into the world as this woman had done. Twice quoted from Longfellow, reminding us that:

Dust thou art, to dust returnest
Was not spoken of the soul.

And from "The Village Blacksmith."

Thanks, thanks to thee, my worthy friend.
For the lesson thou hast taught!

We could only add, "Amen!" The prevalent epidemic of colds and flu has brought several real deaths to our community, but at least three reported mortalities have proved, as Mark Twain said of his rumored demise, "greatly exaggerated." Two former residents have written that they had not, as published, committed suicide, while the latest victim of these canards was a popular vegetable peddler, whose death in an auto wreck saddened local folks, not a little. He was back here yesterday thanking those who had sent seven floral pieces and many telegrams. An interesting experience, surely, and I have been speculating on what he might have thought if he had received flowers from those who he looked upon as bad accounts. Particularly if they were inscribed "Peace at last" or "By their fruits ye shall know them." Somehow, we never think about the corpse reading the mottoes, do we?

The Padre mentioned another Carrasco who served the Lone Pine citizens:

February 9, 1936. Time and a resident undertaker have taken the edge off funerals as we know them in olden Inyo. When Shorty Harris was carried to his Death Valley grave in a motor hearse, his old pals realized that "this here desert has sure changed," as he, himself, once lamented when dog-food hunters from the city slaughtered his burros one night. So quietly, gently, and swiftly are we hurried to our patch of sand nowadays that it is possible for friends not to miss us for days after the funeral. Particularly if they have not seen the death notice on the post office wall or the locust tree down by the blacksmith shop. No longer do you hear the echo of hammers announcing the making of a coffin, a knell that told us all that Aunt Ygnacia had laid aside her knitting forever. Nor do you see six stalwarts carrying their friend on their shoulders, a last tribute now delegated to a rubber-tired dolly. Desert deaths have lost almost everything but their finality.

Even the old-time coroner has gone with stage coach and the faro dealer. They were all, all honorable men, those coroners of yore. Cris Carrasco, our present incumbent, remembers many of them, and he smiles knowingly when I remind him of the departed glories of the past. For, in earlier years, the coroner, then as now the public administrator, exercised plenipoten-

tiary powers and his accountings were made when, as, and if he pleased. Hence we wondered little in the old mining camps when we saw familiar jewelry adorning new ears and necks. It was an old desert custom. To the coroner belonged the spoils.

There was the time a local citizen was found dead in bed. The boys knew he had owned a diamond stickpin, but they did not hear the coroner mention the fact after the funeral. So they promptly frisked the officer of the law, discovering the missing ornament fastened inside his vest. Nobody was surprised, and the incident was probably dismissed with a drink all 'round.

In the term of office of this same administrator of the effects of those who died in summary fashion, a man, whom I shall call Gibson, fell, or was pushed, under the wheels of an ore-laden wagon. He was decidedly dead at any rate when the law was advised of the affair. Previous to his demise, he had left $200 in the keeping of a crony, whose relatives and descendants still grace one of our country communities. This friend, approached by the coroner for the money and knowing his man, informed him that he would turn it over as soon as he had "buried Mike decent." So he ordered the best suit of clothes he could buy the store for the corpse. He covered the casket with black velvet and trimmed it with the silver handles always stocked hereabouts for such sad emergencies. Finally he erected a neat wooden headboard and built and painted a picket fence about the grave. Strangely, when he added up these expenses they totaled about $200.

In the gala days of Keeler, an old chap worked about A.T. Smith's store, sweeping, packing boxes, etc. One day he fell sick unto death, and A.T. and George Mates selected two roustabouts to care for the ailing man in his shack. The two nurses were strangers to each other, hence, despite the fact that each suspected the invalid of having money hidden on his person, neither dared search while the other was around, and the other managed to be around for 24 hours each day. Cris Carrasco happened to be in Keeler with the district attorney when death came to the watched one, and he accompanied Messrs. Mates and Smith to the body. They found $2,000 in currency in a money belt about the dead man's waist. Then and there, the orderlies demanded a settlement for their services. Cris argued in vain that such action would be illegal, that a claim must be presented and the bill paid in regular legal fashion. Only when the disappointed gentlemen found out that the hitherto silent listener to their threats was the district attorney was the law allowed to take its course.

I still remember the generous soil-sampling that was done by night around old Jules Courbon's hut when he passed to his reward a decade and a half ago. Jules, within a hundred yards of whose home the Los Angeles aqueduct skirts the Alabamas, found it profitable to regale the water diggers with wine before prohibition and "revenooers"elevate such traffic to the

fine arts. And it was rumored that he had buried his gold in the shadow of his own fig tree and vine. An hour after the funeral, Cris Carrasco unearthed $1,300 in $5, $10, and $20 gold pieces in a rust-eaten coffee can beneath the floor of the dwelling. The local paper printed the story, the Los Angeles press repeated it, the New York papers ran it in their European editions, and in three days, a wireless message arrived in Lone Pine from France claiming the treasure for Courbon's brother and his family in the old country. But, from the spirited bidding for the residence and the fresh-turned earth about the place, I often wonder whether all Jules' gold found its way across the seas.

It was Cris who told me of an ancient coroner in a mining town in Kern County. Called in for an inquest over a miner, discovered cold and stiff in his bunk, the officer located $12 in the corpse's jeans, and a revolver beneath his pillow. The bystanders asked him what he intended to do with the money. "Do? Why, I am goin' to fine him $12 for having concealed weapons. Come on, boys, the drinks are on me."

5

SHOW BUSINESS

The folk in the small town of Lone Pine again came together when it was time to celebrate and have fun. Father Crowley took advantage of the cooperative spirit of the townspeople and, as a fund-raiser he produced and directed several plays. One that was extremely popular was *The Drunkard* written by H.S. Smith, an old melodrama originally produced back in 1843 by P.T. Barnum. It had played at small dinner theaters in the Los Angeles area for years so was well known to all. The Piñon Players as they were called, put on the show in the spring of 1935 in Lone Pine, Bishop, and Inyokern. The play was acclaimed an outstanding success even in Death Valley where the Hollywood stars often came to visit. All the players and backstage helpers were local people, Catholic and non-Catholic alike. Jean Price remembers seeing Father Crowley watching the scenes backstage and trying to read his prayer book when things went smoothly, or perhaps praying so that things would go smoothly!

Inyokel had a short comment on the interest of the locals in the production:

February 24, 1935. I was pulled up with a jolt while walking with the Padre yesterday. One of the school teachers asked him, "Father, how's the drunkard?" The Padre's explanation quieted my nerves, but was in the nature of a dubious compliment. "She's not referring to either one of us, Inyokel. You see, *The Drunkard* is the play our Piñon players are producing next week, and she was merely making a kind inquiry"

And everyone was caught up in the excitement:

June 23, 1935. Someone called the Padre's attention recently to an item he had overlooked. So he asks me to publish it here, feeling that it will speak for itself. It appeared in the *Inyo Independent* in the issue preceding the Independence performance of *The Drunkard*, produced by the Padre and his Piñon Players. When you read, remember that the author of the item is the Methodist minister. "Independence Community Church. Church school at 10. Evening worship at 7. Attention is called to the fact that the service is

one-half hour early, which will allow for the service to close in ample time for worshippers to attend the play, *The Drunkard*."

The Padre gave his own version of how *The Drunkard* came to be such a success:

March 10, 1935. It was an insane idea in the first place, and I was not the only parishioner who told the Padre so, but he would not be swerved from his course. "Why can't we produce *The Drunkard*? You know we have a hard time keeping afloat financially, and there must be something doing every minute in the money-raising line to supplement our little congregation's offerings. A successful play is as good as a fair or a supper, and this play–" "That's it. This play. Do you realize that this play requires actors above the ordinary amateur type, certainly better actors than you will find in Inyo? Also, because it is so different from our modern plays, the action, the costumes, the scenery–it can't be done." "We'll try, Inyokel. We'll find the actors, if not in one town, in all of them. If not Catholics, there are many others who will be glad to help. And you'll paint scenery and rustle costumes." Thus, dear friends, began the wildest six weeks this roustabout has ever known. Now that *The Drunkard* has become part of the history of Inyo, unless the Padre decides to accept the invitations for a repetition after Lent, the story may be told.

True to his prediction, the Padre found the actors in Owens Valley. The heroine was a telephone operator in Bishop, winsome Margaret Collins. Her hero, doomed to fall through drink and be redeemed through the efforts of a temperance advocate, was Newton Price, son of the Presbyterian minister, himself a teacher at Lone Pine High. The uniting of this happy pair was part of the plot of the drama. Bringing them together for rehearsals was part of the Padre's problem. Add to the above ingredients, the mother of the bride, Mrs.Morrison of Bishop; the reformer, Bud Hugo of the forest service there; John and Agnes Byrne, singers extraordinary, John, the manager of the Bank of America at Bishop; Agnes, the mother of his four children; little Bernadette Abbott, 45 miles south at Independence, where the Padre used to rehearse her privately, he taking the parts of her mother, father, the villain, and all her relatives; and the rest of the cast scattered all the way to Keeler. Mix all together and add return trips to each rehearsal spiced with biting winds, and serve in equal portions on three occasions and you will have *The Drunkard*, as we put it on in Inyo.

There was still another high school teacher in the cast, Sam Alexander of Lone Pine, while Miss Kathro Frank of the faculty there supervised the make-up, characterized by the Bishop theater manager, Harry Holland, as the best he had seen. To her assistance came Mrs. Feil of a Lone Pine beauty shop, who rode to Bishop with us for the performance there. The daughter of another beautician, Virginia Hutton, was actually the pupil by day of Sam

Alexander, and his sister by night in her role as Agnes, the crazed victim of the "villyun." It was not a long step for J. Lincoln Ritchie, manager of the Dow Hotel, adjoining the church at Lone Pine, to fill the part of the landlord, who added so much to the hilarity of the famed bar-room scene. Art Stringer, the town electrician; Charles Mates of Inyo Bottling, and Jack Hopkins, hardwarist and shuffler deluxe, apparently slipped into the roles of barflies with the greatest of ease. Jack Hopkins' hiccoughs were among the high points of each evening's performance. Carl Ruiz had little to do, but did it naturally, as the messenger boy. But the major role, and one that the Padre allotted to three different individuals before he was satisfied, was that of Squire Cribbs, the malevolent plotter, whose downfall brings the cheers of the unsympathetic audience. Bob Gant, a lad in his teens, so well portrayed this gnarled and slithery old villain, that he not only drew hisses, cat-calls, and boos from the moment of his entry, but when he appeared as his real self for a curtain-call many of those who did not know him personally were incredulous that he and Squire Cribbs were identical. The surprise was almost as great as that which greets the appearance of Henry Kleinbach, the youthful creator of this character in the original production, now in its 88th week at Hollywood. Incidentally, Newton Price, the hero of our production, and Kleinbach were classmates at Occidental. There were others, too. Roy King as Drover Stevens, whose whiplash fell on the unlucky hero, was gruff and convincing as an uncouth farmer. Joe Bobernits proved a typical hayseed, frankly at ease before the foots. John Byrne's voice– he was programmed as a "baritone air-conditioner"– mellowed hundreds of hearts with "The Little Brown Jug" and " I Am Roo' fo' the Noo." Margaret Collins swung the crowd with her in her rendition of "There's a Tavern in the Town." But it was Agnes Byrne's "Listen to the Mocking Bird," with sound effects extraordinary from offstage, and "Gathering Sea-Shells" that literally "wowed" them. In the latter song there is a line repeated frequently which ends with the spoken word, "Willie." Thus "Those were the happiest days of all–Willie!" In Bishop, the younger element in the audience began to recite "Willie" with the singer, and cheered and shouted for her return. Finally they combined a rhythmic foot-stamping, reminiscent of a baseball bleacher, shouting "We want Willie." They got him (her). Hugh "Pat" Beatty, Ford dealer at Bishop, drew a big laugh at that performance with his "Schnitzelbank," while at Lone Pine, Capt. Hugh Fee of the CCC camp mingled the squeals of his bagpipes with the crowd's guffaws. Mrs. Geneva Pettit furnished the piano accompaniment in pleasing and facile fashion. Her "Portuguese Pump," Gloria Wagner called her accordion, vulgarly known in radio-land as "the stomach Steinway." With it she discoursed most eloquent music, and coaxed, with the able direction of Newt Price, the audiences into active participation in the singing, after the show, of "songs you have forgotten to remember."

I apologized to the Padre after we had packed them in at Bishop and Lone Pine, and had difficulty in sending them home. He gave all the credit to the cast, to his non-Catholic helpers, to the women who had taken care of the refreshments, and to the sound-effects man. "And" he added, "this show will help buy gasoline for our vacation school. So I told the Little Flower about it. She was behind the scenes."

In this sketchy tale of our play I have no room for the praise I would like to give the well-cast players. All were so satisfactory that it is impossible to single out a few. So violent are the contrasts of character in the drama that even the villainy of the villain serves but to emphasize the goodness of the heroine and her child. Margaret Collins is an accomplished actress and her pantomime was superb. Bernadette Abbott won all by her pathetic simplicity. Her father, as played by Newton Price, was a heart-breaking, Apollo-like cavalier with remarkable stage presence. Sam Alexander, as the timely rescuer of fair maidens, drew round on round of applause for his boyish abandon, while his sister, Agnes (Virginia Hutton), acted flawlessly in one of the most difficult roles. Mrs. Morrison was benignity itself, the harassed mother, winning deserved appreciation in her "No gentleman ever insulted a friendless and unprotected woman," and a roar when she fluttered across stage with fluttering wings at the curtain call. (She had died in the course of the play.) Bud Hugo's quiet appeal to the sodden Edward to begin anew showed a restraint and command that satisfied the critical. Ritchie's makeup as the bartender of yore rolled back the years for most of us, his pompous gestures and waddle did the rest. He was a "natural."

The Drunkard, in these parts, now belongs to the ages, but it will be a few days yet before I can get all the properties back to their rightful owners. These brass buttons go to Pauline Ruiz; the two canes to Max Skinner, local J.P.; the gun, that's Birdsong's over at Penney's. The beaver hat that the villain wore, I guess we'll just keep that as we made it. Father Galvin, who left a plush hat here one time would never recognize it anyway. And, if I can catch the driver of the laundry truck on his day in town I'll give him back his button shoes. Now, this flask ...

Another production of the day was *Is Zat So*, a comedy about a New York prize fighter and his girl friend, by James Gleason who also was the star in the show on Broadway. Father Crowley had invited Gleason to the first performance at the Holland Theatre in Bishop, but the actor was unable to attend due to injuries sustained in an accident. The *Inyo Register* reported on February 18, 1937 that when it played at Furnace Creek Inn at Death Valley: "The hall was packed, despite the rainy weather, and the play kept the crowd in an uproar. We understand this first public performance took half an hour longer than the rehearsal time owing to the necessity of stopping the show so often so that the actors

could be heard above the laughter. One local critic, who was present at the performance, asserts that *Is Zat So* is even funnier than *The Drunkard*, although it is a decidedly modern comedy."[52] The play was also performed in Lone Pine.

Snow White, a popular Disney movie, was performed as a parish play on the front lawn of the Santa Rosa Church. A former parishioner remembers a circus Father Crowley organized, where he was the ringmaster and the animals were all people!

Herman Berg was in the air-conditioning and heating business and had been doing some work on the Dow Hotel next door when the following incident is told:

"Early this year (1935) I had the pleasure of first meeting his Reverence, Monsignor John J. Crowley, Pastor of Santa Rosa Church, Lone Pine, California. Stopped by terrific wind from working on a roof near the church, I observed what looked like a highway engineer, or perhaps a United States forester, clad in khaki breeches, wearing stout leather boots, and a slouch felt hat, hustling sets of theater seats fastened in groups of five or six into what passes for the parish hall. With the easy familiarity and lively curiosity of my kind, I strolled over to investigate what was going on, and was astonished to see the Roman collar worn by our priests. Upon my inquiry whether I could be of help, he became cautious with the answer (or question): 'Are you volunteering, or do you want a job?' So the seats were placed and the show went on, but that is a story in itself."[53]

Later, after they got acquainted he realized that the Padre was not one to shun hard physical labor. He wrote:

"I arrived here yesterday with my faithful 'Shiloppy' and trailer. The Monsignor received me, gave me my room, showed me the tiny kitchen where I might cook my meals, and then drove sixty miles up to Bishop to hear confessions, read early Mass this morning, and then drive back here to read the second Mass at ten thirty, and has his breakfast at the home of the pious Mexican family(Brichaga family) which provides for his physical comfort when he is here. You see, ministering to a parish like this one requires some traveling, so his very Reverence could not use a housekeeper, or at any rate that would be a useless expense, and Father Crowley certainly counts the pennies. There are three churches: Bishop, Lone Pine, and Keeler, and four missions in Death Valley, each of which is visited at least once every week, sometimes oftener. No, there are no other priests, and the only complaint one ever hears from Father Crowley is that the days are not long enough. Where did we leave

him? Oh, yes, he had his Sunday breakfast and came back about one o'clock, (to take a siesta?) Oh, yeah! Hah! He blandly inquired whether I supposed that trailer of mine could be attached to his car. 'Sure, Father, if you have a hitch rigged up on your car.' I saw that he had something up his sleeve, so then it came out. There is a bank on the south side of the church which threatens to cave in, and he knew of some dandy rock up the canyon, right close to the road, and if I could let him use my trailer, he could haul it himself. Well, to shorten the story, we used my flivver, and hauled six loads of about fifteen cwt. each, granite boulders, slivers, rocks, some weighing over two hundred pounds. He works with bare hands, refusing the gloves I offered him. As I am writing this, he sits over there at the other end of his study, saying his office [the Divine Office–special prayers that all priests are required to say daily] and softly snoring (alternately). Now he kneels to finish, right on the floor. Apologetically he guesses he must have eaten too heartily at dinner to fall asleep like that. *Nine thousand pounds of rock, bare handed!* His sermon this morning on marriage and divorce was the best I recollect hearing on the subject. There was a good audience, too, among them a number of movie people from a company on location here. Well, I'm getting sleepy myself."[54]

He continued on another occasion:

"Father read Mass this morning, and I answered in clumsy Latin, something I had not done in many years. The kindly Mexican lady, who cooks Father's meals, represented the congregation. Afterwards Father started his rock wall, with the help of 'Joe,' a hard-rock miner who, in traveling from one of the tunnel jobs in Boulder Canyon or the Los Angeles aqueduct to new fields, was stranded here. We itinerant workers (perhaps 'bums' to you) seem to be a weakness of the Monsignor. He told me yesterday he dislikes to turn away anyone seeking work, and sometimes foregoes the buying of a new book or similar 'luxury' to provide employment. He seems to have no difficulty getting a good day's work out of his protégé. Joe says' 'you cain't hep wohkin foh a man lak him.' Joe talks to himself, as most miners do. Father places the rocks himself, or sees that they are properly laid. Apparently he knows how. The top will be finished in beautiful travertine, which Father brought from Death Valley in his car."[55]

Berg added another comment: "Automobile mileage is one of Father's biggest financial worries, as his schedule calls for over three thousand miles per month, many of them over roads that would make 'gas eaters' out of the most economical cars. He has obtained one of the old style

hand gasoline dispensers, with a tank which he himself installed underground. Today he got his first delivery of gasoline at tank wagon prices, and that will mean a considerable saving."[56]

Herman Berg and his many children became great friends of Father Crowley. Two of the Berg girls helped with the vacation school teaching the children. The Berg boys helped out with serving Mass and doing chores for the Padre. He was often a welcomed guest in their home in South San Gabriel. The Padre contracted with Mr. Berg for heating installations in the Lone Pine and Bishop churches.

Father Crowley's own talents as an actor were once showcased for the Lion's Club of which he was a member. They had invited other Lion's Club members from the Los Angeles area to a weekend celebration with a barbecue dinner and dance at Whitney Portal. Father Crowley and his stooge, Rudy Henderson, presented a short skit which was a takeoff on some of the members (today it would be called a "roast"). This surprised the guests and brought down the house.

Word got out that here was a producer, director, actor and publicist that could not only put on a good show, but also involve everyone in the production. So it wasn't long before his talents were called upon for the annual Jubilee celebration held on Labor Day weekend in Lone Pine. The celebration in 1935 included Spanish troubadours, dances, athletic contests, midget racing cars, foot races, baseball games, rock drilling contests, a band concert, two stunt airplanes, a tamale dinner prepared by the ladies of Santa Rosa Church, a barbecue, a raffle of a new Ford V-8 car and of course a rousing parade with several floats. The *Inyo Independent* reported that this fourth year of Jubilee celebrations was the largest and most successful of all. General manager of the Jubilee Association was Father Crowley assisted by many prominent local residents. In the following years he was also a member of the planning committee for the annual event. The Padre waxed eloquent in describing to the non-Mexican residents the wonders of the tamale prepared so lovingly by the Santa Rosa parishioners. They must have been justly proud of their mention by name:

> *September 16, 1934.* A tamale is fearfully and wonderfully made. Only white corn, ground by the cook herself, may be used and great red chilies that must be rubbed to a pulp on the metate. Corn husks must be secured and washed; beef or chicken, according to one's taste must be cooked; lard must be rendered on the spot, for if you think that your government-inspected, pure food, canned *manteca* can be used for Dona's tamales you are but a blundering Yankee. After the olives have been added and sundry spices that

remain in the arcanum of the kitchen, there comes a moment when there rests upon your plate, or tortilla, a cylindrical package resembling for all the world one of the old-fashioned crackers that thrilled birthday parties when you and I were younger. The true tamale eater unties but one end of the concoction, deviscerates it upon his dish and then proceeds to forget time and space. *Finis coronat opus*– "the end crowns the work," the Latins said. They must have had tamales in mind.

We were led into the fields of gastronomy by recalling the tamale dinner served on the church lawn during the jubilee last week. Under the shadow-dispelling radiance of floodlights borrowed from the baseball club, surrounded by the soft glow of paper lanterns in the cloister arches, Lone Pine sat down to eat. And Mrs. Parcher rose up to play, or rather to sing "La Paloma," and Isabel Sotelo, that was, now Mrs. Mulhouse, gave "La Golondrina." Her little brother found a lot of harmony in an accordion, which pleased Grandpa and Grandma Ruiz mightily. There were tamales galore from the hands of Emma Diaz, Annie Romero and the Savedra girls, as all we old-timers know the Señoras Duarte, Ochoa and Brichaga. Cakes in plenty, even one from the non-Catholic postmistress at Keeler, which bore the words, "Jubilee, September 1,2,3," with pine trees of brilliant green upon its periphery. Even an old bachelor like Inyokel could see that there were many willing hands engaged in the preliminaries that made the supper enjoyable and dozens of willing feet of pretty waitresses that lost no time in tripping over the sward.

'Tis getting beyond my time for jubilees and parades, but I like to go down and meet the boys who have come in from Saline and Darwin, Mazourka and even from Silver Peak. I must have yelled a lot down at the rock-drilling contest, for my throat was awfully dry afterwards. But Bodie Mike took care of that when we went down to his place to discuss the merits of the short jab or the full swing in driving the drill. 'Tis many a year since I swung the double-jack in a drilling contest, but I still believe there are few displays of skill and brawn to equal this 15-minute hammering, by two men, of a steel drill into Sierra granite. The rhythm of their blows, the changing of places from swinging the sledge to holding the drill without the loss of a stroke, the swift withdrawal of 30 inches of steel, tossing it over one's shoulder and replacing it with another while one's companion never pauses in his swing, the frenzy of the crowd as the minutes and seconds are chanted off by the timekeeper, the final reading of the fractions of an inch difference in the results of competing teams–as long as we can shout for that, the West will still be wild and Inyokel won't mind.

Perhaps Father Crowley's talents as a producer and showman explain why he related so well to the personnel of the movie industry when they came to Lone Pine to shoot films in the nearby Alabama

Hills. During the years that Father Crowley was in Lone Pine, such famous movies as *Gunga Din, Lives of the Bengal Lancers, Oil for the Lamps of China, Charge of the Light Brigade, Rhythm on the Range*, and numerous westerns featuring Ken Maynard, John Wayne, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and William Boyd (Hopalong Cassidy) were filmed. The song "Donkey Serenade" from the movie *Firefly* was first practiced on the piano in the Santa Rosa parish hall.

The local folk were always pleased to share their town with their more famous visitors. The stars were allowed their privacy, but were invited to any local parties or dances that were going on. After the movie sets were no longer needed the local residents were allowed to purchase at "fire sale" prices, lumber and other materials to help build their own homes and businesses. Father Crowley also took advantage of this practice and had his share of lumber and adobe bricks from the set of *Rhythm on the Range*. The movies, producers and actors became topics for many a "Sage and Tumbleweed" column. First hand accounts of what it was like for the people of Lone Pine to be on hand in the making of movies follows:

> *October 7, 1934.* The smell of winter is in the air these mornings and the new brilliancy of the stars finds me half listening to hear them crackle. So when the west wind roared down the canyon the day before yesterday, searching out every chink in my domicile through which to shriek a warning, I needed not the subsequent fleecy mantle on the Inyos opposite to recall the fable of the grasshopper and the ant. The hundreds of denuded pine cones about the squirrels' dens in the hills should have whispered, "Hard winter ahead," but I believe a sluggard's mental processes are in key with the rest of his anatomy. And so, justifying myself by a murmured "Better late than never," I set out with my old rifle at dawn to fill my larder against the gray days to come. A-hunting I would go, and methought I knew where, a mile or two beyond my beloved Alabama hills, there grazed a monarch of the glen. But, so help me, and now, good friends, restrain your smiles, the only game I saw this morning were four hawks, a leopard and an elephant.
>
> Yes, I know that you have seen our label above the words, "some facts...and what lies in between," and you think you have caught me at it. But when you go to your movie palace some day soon to see *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, and you gaze at the Akhound of Swat or some such be-turbaned "potentate" coming right down to meet you, using a pachyderm for a jaunting car, with a snarling leopard gliding along behind, while dusty horsemen in the rear carry flapping hawks at their saddle pommels; then you will be sorry that you classed poor old Inyokel with the Munchausens and the Dr. Cooks. For the Paramount Corporation is on location in my backyard and the

Sierras have become, for the nonce, the Himalayas and Mount Whitney right up the company street, if you please, will probably emerge as Khyber Pass. Glad I was able to forget the ant and his troublesome moral as I again emulated the grasshopper and jumped from place to place with the players. Only I did not chirp, for the sound microphones are so sensitive that none but the actors dare whisper in a "shot." The sound of a motor can be picked up a mile away and my friends from town who wished to peek were forced to park their cars two miles away at the stone cabin.

They still tell hereabouts of the close of a trying day in the filming of *The Thundering Herd* in these same hills a year ago. For the last time Noah Beery had stabbed the heroine, or she had stabbed him, I don't recall, when a little onlooker piped up, "Gee, did he kill her?" 'Tis said that then even the director spoke.

No one who has not seen it can picture what the coming of a movie army does to a small town. The population is practically doubled overnight, beds and cots are dragged out of cellars and barns and rented to the set-dressers, truck drivers and minor actors. Every man not otherwise employed, and even some of those, is pressed into service as a mule-skinner or a rider. I did not know I had a friend in the land of Mahatma Gandhi until half a dozen copper-colored, be-whiskered natives hailed me in good Americanese. They were the town boys, who had ridden horses before they learned to walk. Even unshaven Grevy Fitzgerald looked quite Sikh, or is it Bengalese? The movies have ruined my ethnology.

Gary Cooper and his wife, Franchot Tone, Monte Blue, Sir Guy Standing and his Filipino chauffeur kept the younger generation agog until the elephant arrived by truck from Los Angeles. Most of the children, and as many of their elders, had never seen such a monster before and the town's stock of peanuts soared several points. Don Morgan avers that when Tom Devine, who acted as traffic policeman for the company during its stay, saw the elephant come up the canyon he was willing to take the pledge for life.

The Padre warns me that seeing Gary Cooper and his wife playing badminton with Director Hathaway and his wife on the church lawn was no sign of his approval of the production. While the local scenes are all he-man stuff, with no females in sight, strange ingredients are often added in Hollywood. And I hope it will not be taken unkindly, but the Padre tells me that returning from retreat he saw this juxtaposition of features above a movie theater on the Alameda in San Jose: *No More Women. Call It Luck.*

Another column updates us on the *Bengal Lancers*:

February 9, 1935. "Inyo, be yourself!" Thus would I apostrophize my desert home when I find her transferred to the flickering screen as India, China, or other lands forlorn. In *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*, the current tremendous hit which *Time* says was filmed within 50 miles of Hollywood, our Sierra be-

comes the Himalayas. Perhaps our glistening bastions will be "stand-ins" for the Himalayas again in *Oil for the Lamps of China*, filmed this week at the Inyo Marble Company camp. Tar paper slapped over the shingle roofs; white-washed and mud-spattered canvas sheathing weather-boarded shacks; rattan awnings and false, up-ending gables tacked on the ridgepoles–thus did the set-dressers transform this bleak desert village into a hamlet in Cathay. All this could have been done more cheaply in Hollywood, but since the mountains will not come to Hollywood, Hollywood comes to the mountains. Few children in the cities have the opportunities for travel in foreign lands afforded the youngsters here. The whole kaleidoscope of the haunts and ways of men revolves, in endless variety, before the little spectators on the movie location. School busses brought scores of wide-mouthed bairns to view the camels, the lumbering wooden-wheeled carts and the plodding bullocks, the rickshaws bobbing before the camera's eye. The little Mexicans were quick to recognize the ships of the desert as the conveyances once used by the Wise Men. It was one of their elders, however, who said the camels had feet like Greta Garbo.

More on *Gunga Din* and *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*:

July 24, 1938. When you see *The Cowboy and the Lady* at your picture palace you will envy Gary Cooper and Merle Oberon the glory of their mountain home. But neither Gary nor Merle will have seen the actual setting of the picture, unless, indeed, the gentleman recalls those four years back when he fought Indian tribesmen and died against these same rocks in *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer*. This time doubles are taking the parts of the principals in the local shooting, which includes long-range shots at cattle and snowy peaks. The low of the herd and the high of the hills will be ours, the rest will be Hollywood.

Movie companies are no news in Southern Inyo, but the picture deserves mention because it is being filmed simultaneously with a super-colossal, "the biggest R-K-O has ever produced–*Gunga Din*." It was the use of Whitney and the Sierra in *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer* which inspired *The Charge of the Light Brigade* and now *Gunga Din*, and the same background becomes Peshawar or Broken Bar Ranch by a little manipulation of the foreground. A much-traveled gentleman who saw *The Lives of a Bengal Lancer* is responsible for the statement that the portion of the picture which looked least like India was that which actually had been taken overseas. I defy the most hardened native of California to keep in touch with realities when he gazes upon the ruined temple, deliberately battered to show the marks of time, rising from a saddle in the great sepia worm-hills of the Alabamas; or to keep from rubbing his eyes as he surveys the tiny houses scattered among the rocks 100 yards from the main village street, miniature houses so perfectly placed that the perspective suggests intervening miles instead of feet. Even the

fake telephone line, which begins out of camera range and disappears over a rise, speaks of league on league of silver life-line connecting some lonely outpost with the heart of the Empire. Behind the latticed walls and under the rattan roofs are two-by-fours and celotex, in front you know, even without smelling the braziers and listening to the shouting of the hucksters from the bazaars, that this is India. For up there, are not those the Himalayas?

The movie company built a complete tent city on the location, four miles from Lone Pine, to house their carpenters, and later the actors. Two hundred and fifty union craftsmen from Hollywood worked three weeks on the erection of the sets thus far completed, a British army outpost, a temple, and an Indian village. More than a quarter of a million feet of lumber were used at first, and, when a third of the village was mysteriously destroyed by fire the night before shooting was to begin, a few hundred thousand feet more of material were rushed up from the lumberyard. Kipling never dreamed that his "limpin' lump o'brick dust, Gunga Din," would thus tap the movie magnates' millions, or that one day an actor would quaff copiously of the melted snows of Lone Pine Creek, brought to his tent by special pipe line, and then lie down in front of the camera and feign to empty Din's goatskin waterbag.

' E lifted up my 'ead,
An' he plugged me where I bled,
An' he guv me 'arf-a-pint o' water–green:
It was crawlin' an' it stunk,
But of all the drinks I've drunk,
I'm gratefullest to one from Gunga Din.

And yet another mention of *Gunga Din*:

August 14, 1938. Sam Jaffe, who played the Lama in *Lost Horizon*, is cast in the role of *Gunga Din*, now being filmed here. His costume, of course, is as Kipling described it, or as Mahatma Gandhi wears it. So, when his wife requested the Padre the other day for permission to take his photograph, the pastor was a little surprised at the reason offered. "You see," said Mrs. Jaffe, "You are the first man of the cloth I have seen in such a costume (she referred to the Padre's khaki and puttees), and I think it is wonderful." "All right, you may take it on condition that you autograph a print just the way I say and give it to me." "Why, certainly, what do you wish me to write?" "Just sign it, 'To one man of the cloth from the wife of another, Mrs. Gunga Din.'"

And after the filming was done the Padre spoke of its aftermath:

March 19, 1939. Did you see *Gunga Din*? Some of the readers of "Sage and Tumbleweed" were quite peeved to discover no pines in the scenery and

accused me of misrepresentation. You never can satisfy some people. What would pines be doing in a British Indian outpost? The sets–the village, the cantonment, and the temple have all been torn down and carted away. There are three or four of the plaster elephants still standing on the temple site and many of the visitors pose by them. Spainhower sold the lumber and celotex to Lone Piners and I notice that Claude Van Norman has one of the prison walls up at the house he is remodeling in Independence. Two of the pillars are in front of Spainhower's ranch. We are getting quite handy at building sets ourselves.

Father Crowley did not let the *Time* magazine mention of the filming of *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* 50 miles from Hollywood go unnoticed. The *Inyo Independent* of Feb. 22,1935 carried this story in a column entitled "Fancies and Facts...by Frank" with the sub-heading "Corrected":

"*Time*, weekly news magazine, with a quarter of a million readers, recently carried an article in reference to the filming of *Lives of a Bengal Lancer*. That was alright, if *Time* hadn't left the inference that the picture was made in or near Hollywood. This was too much for Father John J. Crowley, who is intensely loyal to Owens Valley and who is resentful if it doesn't get all that is coming to it. The article stirred him into action and he wrote a letter to the editors, which *Time* published in the issue of Feb. 18. The letter reads:

"'In your review of *Lives of a Bengal Lancer* you report that most of the picture was filmed on location within 50 miles of Hollywood.

"'True, some shots were taken at Chatsworth, within the radius given. But for two weeks this mountain town 200 miles from Hollywood was overrun with synthetic Bengalese, an increase of 33 and one-third percent in the population. Paramount dropped $30,000 of the million and a half here, gave most their first glimpse of an elephant, and almost succeeded in driving a few of our topers into taking the pledge. My congregation upped one, a gloriously illuminated gripman, one of the eight rewarded with a gallon of whiskey bonus for working all Saturday night.

"'If your readers will look up the company street, they will glimpse the top of the U.S.–Mt. Whitney. Despite your account, Whitney is not yet within the Los Angeles city limits, nor has it gone Hollywood.

"'(Rev.) John J. Crowley, Santa Rosa Church, Lone Pine, Cal.

"'P.S. *Oil for the Lamps of China* is on location here today, with four camels. I may get my convivial sheep into dry pastures yet.'"[57]

He described the filming of *Gunga Din* and some of the tribulations that beset a movie producer:

September 4, 1938. Two busloads of bushy-bearded Hindus–at least they looked like Hindus, even if they swore profusely in United States–have just pulled out for Los Angeles. Joan Fontaine waved them a smiling goodbye from the hotel porch. *Gunga Din* R-K-O's "super colossalest" picture, has moved to the home grounds for a fortnight, leaving us poor indeed. Already 20 days behind schedule, owing to lengthening and changing the script and to idle days when clouds spoiled the continuity with previous day's shootings, the pencil-sharpeners of Hollywood have the jitters. So they have ordered the whole crew home for interior scenes, after which the stars will be released for other pictures and the extras will return for another month of mob shots, battles, and background. Stars' salaries have too many ciphers on the upside of the decimal point, hence schedules are arranged so as to have them scintillate in as limited an orbit as possible. Inside figures indicate that each day's stay of this group on location costs $40,000. If you have any doubts as to the value of California sunshine, come up some afternoon and watch one of the big boys going through the motions of tearing out hair which he has long since torn out as a few thundercaps gather over Whitney and 500 actors sit around playing penny ante and jackstraws while the taximeter clicks merrily on into the $15,000 bracket. Remember, too, that 90 minutes of movie means about 90 days of shooting, and that far more than 90 minutes of movie die on the floor of the cutting room. 'Tis a queer business entirely.

And in another column he found an ecumenical twist in the following story:

April 16, 1939. Harry Sherman Productions, producers of the *Hopalong Cassidy* Westerns featuring Bill Boyd, are shooting down at Spainhower's Ranch. They have built a replica of an old mission, the first unit of a western street to be used for many future pictures. The manager borrowed some of the fake adobe brickwork which we salvaged from the *Rhythm on the Range* set three years ago to line our hall. He also located the wrecked dome of the *Gunga Din* temple, where Din stood and bugled his warning to the troops, and is using it as an Indian oven for atmosphere. When the director found that Pedro de Cordoba, who is playing the priest in the quickie, wanted to go to Mass and Communion at Easter, "even if it is at 10:30," he tried to coax me to say the parish Mass on the set. Impossible, as many would be unable to walk that far, and there was no adequate reason outside publicity for somebody thus to risk sensationalizing and cheapening the Holy Sacrifice. So the whole company knocked off for an hour to permit Pedro and his co-religionists to attend Mass. "A Daniel come to judgment."

Harry Sherman, a fine Jewish gentleman, like most of his technical staff, got an idea he would like to give a banquet and birthday party for a hundred or so in honor of of his crew in our hall, the aforesaid adobe-lined salon, on

Easter Sunday night. Ritchie asked to have our Altar Society handle it, on two days' notice. Sorry to refuse him, but convinced him that the mere suggestion of such a task to my meager group of workers would result in a shake-up among the pastors of the diocese. Finally arranged a compromise. The Methodist Ladies Aid rented our hall and served baked ham to the good Jewish gentlemen and their friends on the night of the Pasch in the Catholic hall.

He continued in the same column with how Pedro de Cordoba also helped during the Holy Week services at Santa Rosa church:

September 4, 1938. Pedro de Cordoba was the voice of Christ on the radio program called *The Living God*, broadcast nationally during Holy Week. He raced to Lone Pine after the Holy Thursday production to fulfill his contract in the local picture, leaving John Costello to read his lines. De Cordoba listened in on the radio at Jim Rogers' barber shop. The nation did not hear him on Good Friday, for that night he was singing the *Stabat Mater* in our 25x40 church at Lone Pine.

He enjoyed telling the story of Victor McLaglen who played one of the roles in *Gunga Din*:

September 4, 1938. "Ladies and gentleme-e-e-en! In this corner Henry Kelly, better known as just Kelly, one-eighth Yaqui Indian, more than seven-eighths Irish, caretaker of Clarence Badger's brookside cottage at Lone Pine, California. Kelly weighs 135 pounds ringside. And in this corner the veteran of British foreign campaigns, the unparalleled, brawny, beefy, personification of brute strength, the Sergeant Quirk of *What Price Glory*?–recall him in *Wee Willie Winkie*?–the one and only man-eating tough sergeant of the silver screen, Victor McLaglen!!!" Well it wasn't announced exactly like that, but it might have been. For Kelly, who is watching over his employer's interests in the shady retreat by Lone Pine Creek while Clarence Badger directs pictures in Australia, knew McLaglen in Los Angeles. So it was natural that the big actor should drop in on the little Tucson Irishman of an evening, especially since the movie tent city was scarce a mile from Badger's cottage. As Kelly tells it: "Vic sat down or rather stretched himself out in the big chair, George sat in the corner, and I reached over and handed Mac some peanuts. So that he wouldn't spill them all over the room, I brought in a cardboard box for the shells. But do you think he paid any attention to that? No sir. He just scattered them everywhere; he even flicked them across on my bed. I said nothing until he got up to go, when I lifted my hand and said, 'Just a moment please. George, you go out there in the kitchen and in the corner you'll find a nice, red-handled broom. And a dustpan, too. Bring them in.' George looked at me kind of scared like, but he went out and

came back with the broom and pan. 'Now give them to him, and let him sweep up those shells!' Vic stared at me and bellowed, 'Say, do you know who I am!' 'Yes, you're a big palooka. Sweep up those shells.' 'And if I don't?' 'Well, you wouldn't look so pretty in the picture tomorrow if you had a pick-handle draped around your neck, would you?' He looked at me for a minute or two, and by gosh he got down on one knee and swept up every scrap from the floor. As he started to go out I cut in, 'No, you don't. See that bed. I have to sleep in it. Clean out the junk you shot in there.' He did. When he was through he came over and looked me straight in the eye. 'Kelly, you're all right, and I like you. I get so damned sick of people running up and gushing, 'Oh, you're the great Victor McLaglen. How wonderful!' And 'Won't you sign my autograph book, please?' 'Arf! But you, gad, you're the goods, Kelly!'" Of course the little man could have said to McLaglen as he handed him the broom, "To the Victor belong the spoils," but he had too much Yaqui in him for that. Or was it the other seven-eighths?

The Padre showed the human side of the actors in another incident right next door at the Dow Hotel:

August 7, 1938. Susanne McGinnis is a little girl from Pittsburgh, Pa. Although Susanne's dad is apparently a lawyer of consequence back there, and sees that she lacks for nothing, Susanne is a weak and ailing child. Evidently her 12 or 13 years have never been blessed with the joys of health, and today she walks with the pace of an invalid, side by side with her nurse. When business brought her father to Beatty he took Susanne along, promising her that she would see Hollywood, perhaps even glimpse a star. But the heat of Death Valley and the ardors of the way tuckered her completely, and Hollywood became a punctured bubble while the party rested at Lone Pine to permit the patient to gather enough strength for the return to the East. And here, on the porch of the Dow Hotel, Victor McLaglen came up and shook her by the hand, and Douglas Fairbanks, Jr., and Joan Fontaine and Phyllis Brooks signed her autograph book. Then they allowed her to watch *Gunga Din* being filmed on the set behind the Alabamas, where Susanne made history by laughing out loud when McLaglen muffed his lines. The scene had to be retaken anyway, but there is a little girl back in Pittsburgh who will wait for the coming of *Gunga Din*, and who will live over in her reveries the day in Lone Pine when Susanne McGinnis had the luck of the Irish.

Not all the actors were as well received as the Padre observed:

April 19, 1936. The Padre's dog, Cuff, fancied not at all the Schnauzer, Arno, who accompanied his master, Errol Flynn, to Lone Pine. Hence, he lost no time in chasing the baboonish canine off the church grounds. Remonstra-

tion on the part of the lackeys, or whatever movie stars' dogmen are called, availed not. Which recalls the clever story of the Lone Pine fire written by Miss Barnes for the *Los Angeles Illustrated Daily News*. She pictured Errol Flynn as climbing out of bed when the trumpet was blown in the hotel corridors and crossing the street to see what he called "his first fire." He tried to help with the hose, but was promptly told to mind his own business and get out of the way. "Tell him who you are," suggested an actor standing near. "He knows who you are," interposed Director Mike Curtiz. Perhaps Cuff knew just who Arno was, too.

The film industry came even closer to the Padre's domain:

June 13, 1937. When you see Jeanette MacDonald and Allan Jones in *Firefly* you will not see a byline that the recording of Jones' half-mile long solo was first reproduced in the Padre's kitchen, borrowed by the sound men for the evening. Jones rode along beside the stage-coach in which Jeanette is supposed to be traveling through the Pyrenees and serenaded her from horseback, while young Robert Spindola sat with the driver and played a flute accompaniment. Only Jeanette MacDonald never came to Lone Pine at all, her double occupying the coach; and Jones never sang, this being dubbed in later; and young Spindola romped with the Padre's pup about the hotel while a local lad rode in his stead, for the stage made him sea-sick; and the mountain pass was not in the Pyrenees, but just our own Tuttle Creek Canyon. Add to this the interesting note on makeup for this play given me by Harry Worth, who has a bit in it, that the director prefers soft lighting and in consequence brings out the highlights of the actor's features by powdering their cheekbones and chins with gold dust, and you should be in a mood to attend a modern movie and say "Is it or am I?"

And in another column he noted some of the incongruities:

July 21, 1935. Despite the coming of the white stripe and the neon signs, granolithic sidewalks and corner gasseries, Lone Pine remains Western enough to corral the most of the movies filming, and "sounding," the great untamed. Paramount has just filmed *Wanderer of the Wasteland* here. They waited until "Hop-Along Cassidy" Company pulled out, who in turn followed some concern or other that brought in an old stagecoach by auto truck. They were preceded by an outfit that burned up some covered wagons over on the dry lake, using anachronistic gasoline for the job. Nine other Zane Grey sage-scented romances are scheduled for this location. Reasons given by the managers: splendid sunlight, due possibly to unusual clarity of the air at this altitude; ideal backgrounds of the Sierra and the fantastic Alabamas; horses and splendid riders always available; first-class hotel accommodations. Not to mention several liquor stores.

The hotel porch presents a motley crew when a company is on location–Bengal lancers snatching a puff or two before going forth to die (with seven retakes); bar-flies that would be chased from the premises if they were not on the pay-roll at a hundred a week and their beards grown for the occasion. Two rattlers almost shook their buttons off the other night. They had been imported to bite one of the principals for an unstated stipulation, sans venom. The Padre's pup sniffed at them and suddenly remembered a bone he had buried a half-mile away. Somehow, it will be hard to forget when I see that picture that the haggard desert-rats had driven to the scene from their air-conditioned hostelry a few moments before. But then Von Stroheim filmed a man dying of thirst in Death Valley, just after the victim, Von Stroheim, et al had breakfasted on chilled grapefruit...

In the Hop-Along Cassidy Company were the brothers of two priests, Ray Flynn and Frank McGlynn, Jr. Director Flynn's brother is a Jesuit in Arizona, McGlynn's a Dominican whose ability as a sculptor has won for him a special commission from Rome to study art in Europe. McGlynn's father was the Abraham Lincoln in Drinkwater's famous play. Max Reinhardt, en route to Reno and divorce and a new lady, was forced to tarry at Bishop because of his mother's illness. While a lead in the Zane Grey picture regretted that his work here made it impossible for him to start another series of first Fridays in honor of the Sacred Heart. Some wag has dubbed our Padre, "The Wanderer of the Wasteland." His car registers 30,000 miles in ten months driving o'er the veldt...

In the thirties Joe Breen was the head of the Legion of Decency which set standards for movies and had much influence on how they were produced. The Padre cites one intervention that had a long lasting effect on the unforgettable film, *San Francisco*, and many more that followed:

October 3, 1937. San Francisco, that smashing box-office hit, is an example of Breen's love of decency and his dramatic sense. It was ten months before the writer and producer of that film could satisfy Joe on the details of the story so that he would permit them to proceed with the filming. The original plot was based upon an actual incident in San Francisco's history, plus, of course, the earthquake. The incident was the owning of a string of brothels by a noted Barbary Coast gambler, the lady who managed these houses being his inamorata. A zealous minister led a reform wave which resulted in all the dens being raided and closed, only to have some 300 of the inmates file into the pews in his church the following Sunday and demand bread. "That's out," said Joe. "You can keep the earthquake and the gambler and the minister and the sweet little choir girl who falls in love with the vice lord, but no prostitutes and no houses of assignation." A new start led somehow to the introduction of a priest as a boyhood pal of the gambler. "Who is

going to play the part of the priest?" asked Joe. They gave him the name of some perfectly prim and genteel actor. "No. Remember Bishops are sensible men, and no Bishop would put a priest of that type down on the Barbary Coast. He'd put a two-fisted man there, one who could use his dukes if he had to." In a month, Hopkins, the author, was back with an idea born of this suggestion. He recalled knowing some priests of the old Los Angeles Cathedral staff who used to be members of the L.A. Athletic Club when he was reporting for the *Times*. "And they could use their dukes, I know. What a fool I was to get in the ring with one of them." Thus came into being the scene in which Spencer Tracy knocks down Clark Gable in the ring at the club, and later, when he is rescuing Jeanette MacDonald from Gable's advances, refuses to strike back when the gambler hits him on the mouth. The author's original idea was a fist-fight at this juncture. Breen ruled it out, as he did the dialog. Those who saw the film will recall the tenseness of the action in that spot, and can rejoice that Joe had a hand in its fashioning.

Yet, despite the universal acclaim for *San Francisco*, some 250 letters reached Breen's office from Catholics, denouncing him for permitting a priest to be portrayed in "this derogatory fashion," while nearly a thousand came in from non-Catholics or anti-Catholics accusing him of "selling out" to the Pope and of using the screen as a method of Catholic propaganda. He is used to such fan mail and says that the largest percentage of complaints arriving at his desk now are from groups lamenting the showing of drinking and women smoking on the screen. These usually come in a stereotyped form, correctly addressed, and he knows why, because one of his agents followed a lecturer through the South one season to find out how it was done. In these small towns the agitator would gather 30 or 40 in a school house at night and urge them to send their petitions to Mr. Breen, writing his name and address on the blackboard. Joe knows the course taken each winter by these antis by the order in which the letters follow each other to Hollywood.

Death Valley also was a location that interested Hollywood, especially for the M.G.M. movie *Twenty Mule Team*. The Padre had some vignettes in his column of the filming and of the actors in this classic movie. He highlighted some incidents:

> *March 3, 1940.* The M.G.M. folk are trying to resurrect the Death Valley of the borax days for their picture, *Twenty Mule Team*, and they are having a time. Everybody knows that they have not pastured mules at Furnace Creek Ranch for many a year, so it was no small chore to comb the state for 22 hybrids for the occasion, hybrids which by no stretch of the imagination could be called descendants of the original borax haulers. That the specimens secured were excellent is testified to by Johnny Mills, who says he never saw better even in the days when a mule was as good as a Packard.

But as for shoeing them–that was another matter altogether. The task took the better part of a week, and one particular jenny got so playful with the imported blacksmith–burning his wrists by kicking the rope which he had fastened around her and him during the fittings, sinking her teeth into his shoulder, and lifting him up and dropping him–that one would suspect her of having had previous experience in Hollywood.

A week was spent in teaching them to respond to the jerk line, step over the traces on turns, etc. It was the hope of the director to catch some action shots of the team winding down Golden Canyon, displaying the animals walking over the chains on corners, but rushes revealed that to the average movie-goer all this would be love's labor lost. Only one versed in desert lore would recognize the patient training evidenced by this apparent confusion on the curves, so it is probable that when you see the *Twenty Mule Team* they will be stretched out like an election parade. Nor will you guess how long it took to swell the old borax wagon wheels to fit the tires, in a climate where iron expands and wood shrinks. You will look in vain, too, for the Pacific Coast Borax name on the side of the vehicles–skillful camouflaging has wiped out all trace of that. There is real borax, though, piled high above the sideboards.

Wallace Beery stars as the mule-skinner, and Leo Carrillo is his Indian swamper. On off days as when the sun hid out last week at a cost of $30,000 per diem to M.G.M., Wally takes a spin in his plane. One afternoon he swooped down over the rest of the cast and spoiled, so the camera man said, a few hundred feet of sound with the roar of his motor. Seeing a mule-skinner climb from his wagon box into the pilot's seat of a pursuit job is just one of Death Valley's little mirages these days.

The Padre was telling some of the group about the All Souls Memorial Chapel he plans for the valley, and located the site by saying:"It will rise from the mesa at the end of the airfield. In fact I am worried lest some aviator hit the tower of the chapel after we get it built," Wally Beery interrupted, "You go right ahead and build your chapel, Padre, and I'll drop down and take off the spire. I'm a Protestant!" "Fine, Wally, I'm glad you told me your intentions. I'll arrange right now with the architect to have the steeple reinforced so we'll have one less Protestant!"

Nor is that all. The script called for Wally's immersion into the alkaline depths of Bad Water, the lowest spot in America. Since the star had contracted laryngitis from shouting at the mules–always according to the script, he assured me–the director feared a possible cold or worse as a result of this enforced bath. So, believe it or not, a tank of natural gas was hitched up to a burner and a portable water tank, and into a prepared hole this warmed water was poured for the he-man's ducking. I wondered whether they would have put ice cubes in it in August. Von Stroheim fed his actors iced grapefruit in Death Valley when he filmed *Greed* one summer; iced grapefruit

before going out to picture the agony of a man dying of thirst!
Carrillo is unquestionably the most popular man in Death Valley at this hour. His unaffected democracy, his love of little children–from the Indians whom he convulsed with his imitations to the tot who sat entranced on his knee at Furnace Creek Inn, while staid guests wondered how a squawking parrot had found its way into that quiet realm. These tricks have endeared him to the rising generation. And his speech at the Inyo-Mono banquet, when he recalled having met the Padre at Holy Cross in 1911 and thence launched into a eulogy of California and the American ideal, mark him as a citizen of the first class.

6

ANIMAL KINGDOM

Father Crowley was a great lover of animals and a careful observer of their habits, charms and dangers.

Mention is made previously of Father Crowley's dog Cuff, named after the first dog recorded in Inyo history. He crossed Death Valley with the original Death Valley '49ers in 1849-50. The Padre's dog was often the topic of comments in the weekly newspapers, and the following account was published in the *Inyo Independent:*

"Cuff, adventurous pup, owned by Father Crowley, has had another adventure. This time it was in Bishop when he and his master visited Carl Nellen's Rainbow service station. While his master's attention was diverted, Cuff nabbed a tube of tire patching cement and tried munching up on the delicacy, only to find that cement had an unusual effect upon his mouth. Maybe Cuff was merely fixing up an inner tube."[58]

Inyokel yielded his pen to Cuff, letting him defend himself and giving his dog's-eye view of events:

> *May 5, 1935.* "On the Cuff, or Dog Days in Inyo. The Peregrinations of a Padre's Pup, an Autobiography." "Heard my master, the Padre, telling Dusty Symmonds at the shoe-store that he needed a new pair of leather thongs for his boots because I had chewed the old ones all up. Well, what did he expect, putting tasty stuff like that just where a fellow can sit and ruminate while the boss plays on that clattery black machine that rings a bell every time I doze off.
>
> "Got a licking and an awful scare today. The Padre stopped at Roland Giroux's apple ranch back of Big Pine, and after a while Mr. Giroux gave him a rod with a line on it and he went out and began throwing the line in a couple of pools near the house. At the end of the line a piece of raw meat was fastened. Tried to catch it, but was chased off. All of a sudden the Padre pulled a wiggly slippery creature out of the water, beat it against the ground, and then laid it aside. Smelled interesting, so I ran off with it. Whew, what a walloping! If he wanted it, why did he throw it away? Decided to follow the Giroux youngster, who had another rod nearby, and see if I could swipe a morsel of meat. Pretty soon there it was, dangling in front

of my nose. I gulped and ran, and was pulled up on my haunches. Jumping cats, it had a hook in it, that caught in the roof of my mouth, while young Giroux tugged and screamed. My master finally yanked it loose, started to say something, but I didn't wait. Went and romped with Giroux's pup. A little rustic, although he comes of a Bakersfield family, but better company than loaded meat and squirmy smelly animals that the Padre seems to think so much of.

"We were all set to leave for Fresno today, a place I had never seen. By the lumberyard I found an odd bug and started to sniff up some information about him. Slipped and fell in the ditch. In order to dodge a licking I jumped on the Padre, making a little fuss over him. Was I pained when he bowled me over, shouting 'you fool pup, get off! You're all oil. Why did you pick the sump to tumble in?' Then he dragged me to one of the parishioners' homes, for we have no hot water at our place, and gave me a bath. Tried to nip him but got soap in my eyes. 'A half hour wasted,' he kept muttering. By the way, what is a sump?

"Death Valley today. Rather enjoyed it, as I had heard the master tell someone he had named me for the first dog to enter California through Inyo, a Cuff who walked through Death Valley with the Manly party in 1850. Located a skull in the museum at Stovepipe Wells and was taking a nibble when I was caught. Overheard Manager Hunter saying it was the head of an ox slain at Salt Creek by the Manly expedition, which means that my forefather namesake undoubtedly dined on it. Dry stuff!

"Driving back through the Panamints with the boss and Father Fox, a big man who has been around here for a week or so, I got restless and tried to climb out. The Padre had just decided to let me go for a run when he shouted, 'Rattler! Here Father, you hold the dog.' Then he got out and left me while he threw rocks at another one of those wriggly things, only this one was longer and could put a little more English on his curves. He had a new stunt too of lifting his head and tail at the same time and making a noise like those beads the master drapes around the steering wheel when we go on long trips together. I tried my darnedest to get out to join the fun, but the fat priest held on. Maybe some day I can dig one up for myself in the back yard.

"I'm getting good. While the boss was watering the lawn today a man drove up to the hotel next door in a big car. Rushed over to investigate, and as he stepped out a gust of wind blew off his hat. Caught it before it reached the ground and was off to the races. The Padre did not see me until I had passed in front of him, and then he started. Round and round we went, but neither of them could catch me. Finally the master made a dive for me, missed, and did a spread-eagle on the grass. I laughed so much I dropped the hat and ended the game. Then they began to laugh, so I knew it was all right. Have been watching the hotel ever since, but have found nothing but

an old calf hoof that Lena Boyer's terrier, Powder, had hidden on me last week. It's safe now under the boss' bed.

"Visited the state fish hatchery above Independence this afternoon. Wondered what fish were like until I peeked into one of the ponds and saw thousands of the slippery imps I had met at Giroux's. Two thousand in each pool, I think the man said, and he was feeding them from a bucket–think of it–of chopped-up liver and hearts. A hundred and eighty pounds of this high living for those worthless fish every day. Managed to sneak a bite or two when some slipped over the edge of the pail, and got so mad when I saw the finny pests climbing on one another to eat that I fell in. Somehow contrived to get to the steep bank at a shallow spot, but the Padre would not pull me out. Insisted that I swim–whatever that was–to him, at the place I had tumbled in. Finally I leaped towards him, landing with a great splash under his nose. I don't remember just what remarks he made after that. Sounded somewhat like 'damp pup.' Well, I was. Who wouldn't be?

"Why aren't all cats like Mito, Blanche Ochoa's grey Persian? He's willing to chew my ears and roll around in the dirt a little without getting mad about it. But that Keeler lady! The Padre sat down to breakfast in Mrs. Perez's kitchen after Mass last Saturday and I started on a tour of inspection. Somebody should have warned me that mother cats with one kitten are touchy! All I did was to peep in the box behind the stove and a furry comet flew out and landed, spikes down, on my back. Now, I do not like piggy-back, or catty-back. So I streaked for the boss, that cussed cat hanging on. Mrs. Perez grabbed a broom, and we went round and round the table, talking Spanish, English, high feline, and low canine. I had lost count of the laps when the Padre landed a beautiful drop-kick on my rider, and Mrs. Perez literally brushed her outside. Next time I play, somebody else can take the kitty.

"What did the Padre mean when he told an inquirer the other day that he thought it would be 'putting on the dog' to put a collar on Cuff?"

A little over a year later the Padre penned this beautiful tribute to the lively but faithful Cuff:

July 12, 1936. Tip came over this morning, his silver-tipped ebony tail in the air, his nose on the ground. Cuff and I had been away two days, and I knew that busy nose had covered every inch of the yard in our absence. For, with Cuff away, there would be no races around the lawn, no glorious jaunts among the rocks, with chipmunks to chase and lizards to track. So over he came at sunrise to find the car, but not Cuff. I watched him sniffing the running-board and tracing my steps to the house. His greeting leap carried a question,"Where is my little black-eared pal?" How could I tell him, as he stood by the peach tree and scanned the neighborhood, that his playmate

was lying under the fresh earth beneath his feet, that 15 minutes before I had deepened the hole Cuff himself had dug as a refuge from the sun and had laid there his poor broken little body?

I had grown sleepy at the wheel and had pulled off the highway on an old mine road. Side roads always brought Cuff to attention. They meant a stop, an opportunity to scurry down the ruts on the scent of the tires, a chance to investigate the strange smells that came from burrows beneath the sage. So he uncurled himself from my shoulder and was off into the night through the half-opened door. And while I slept death came to him in the desert, for an hour later I awoke and waited for the patter of feet or the familiar panting that announced his return from the chase to check up on my presence. But there was no sound from him as I picked him up from the spot where he lay, half off the highway, inches from the safety he had tried to reach as some dazzling juggernaut bore down upon him with the speed of lightning. I had named him Cuff after the first dog to pass through Death Valley with the forty-niners, and he died in a conflict with the machine age. He was truly a desert dog.

Somewhere in his ancestry there was a strain of water spaniel, and he never hesitated to immerse himself in a pool or stream, regardless of the proprieties or the temperature. First to plunge into the icy waters of the newly created lake at the foot of Mt. Whitney, he had been equally at home in the slime of Bad Water at the bottom of Death Valley, and equally as lavish with his distribution of the accumulated moisture upon my patient shoulders. Once he bathed in an oil sump; once, too, he told the goldfish to move over in the fountain within a convent patio. He ruined my fishing by his dives into the very pools in which I was warily casting from behind a tree or rock. Lacking an actual pool or ditch, he always found the moisture hidden on the shady side of the house, where I had planted my bulbs. He held it as a point of honor never to allow a bulb to remain rooted for more than a week.

Horses were always worthy of a bark, cows irritated him, sheep made him hoarse. From his perch on my shoulders, or with his nose pressed against the windshield, he had expressed his disapproval of elk and deer, bob-cats and coyotes, snakes and, an hour before he died, a fox. A rabbit called for a flight though the air to the nearest window. If it were open he continued on his course. Once on Westgard Pass I managed to seize the end of his tail as he sailed by me on his leap after a chipmunk, and thus held him suspended a few inches above the running board while I guided the car around the blind curve to a stop. I hauled him in and he immediately bounded out the other side. Otto Renner's denuded dome bore for many days the mark of one of Cuff's unlooked-for take-offs after a rabbit. Otto was my unsuspecting companion in the front seat that night.

Wise men tell us that when a dog dies he dies all over. But although there

be no immortality for a man's friend, no man can truly love a dog, and be loved in return, without being enriched thereby for days without end. I think it was a minister who wrote that for his dog he filled the place of God. In him his dog trusted, never questioning, even when beaten apparently without reason, following without cavil, grateful for a nod, but following even without it, certain always that somehow, somewhere his master would find for him food and shelter. Cuff never asked whither away. He leaped to his place and left the rest to me. The night might find us curled up in a common warmth beneath a cold Sierran moon, or him sighing contentedly on a Persian rug under a bed in Furnace Creek Inn. His supper might be the remainder of the contents of the can I had opened by some desert water-hole, or the tid-bits he filched from the garbage after a parish party. He knew I would provide, and frequently my lonely reveries were interrupted by a moist tongue, licking my ear, to let me know that he thoroughly understood and approved of our status quo. Sometimes I turned around to look at him after one of these demonstrations, but he invariably pretended to be absorbed in viewing the road ahead, as if ashamed for betraying himself as a sentimental slob in a moment of weakness.

I know where he has buried dog biscuits, wieners, and sundry bones. They are scattered all over Inyo county, for he knew all Inyo, and since his death I have found that all Inyo knew and loved him. Some day he planned to return and enjoy those hoarded treasures. But he lies beneath the peach tree by my window, where Whitney's shadow creeps in the long afternoons. But even in the bones he hid he has left me a lesson, and the trust he placed in me has made me less sordid, and the love he gave me has made me more kind. In these he lives, and his master thanks God for Cuff.

He was given another dog soon after–a mongrel mix. Mat Perez tells the story of a wealthy Los Angeles friend of the Padre's who said to him: "Why do you keep that pooch? I can get you a thoroughbred." The Padre responded: "The reason I have him is that nobody cares for him," a comment which pretty much typified the Padre's dealings with people as well as animals. He was a tiny, but yappy dog with a big loud bark he used if he thought any harm might come to his master. He often accompanied the Padre on his many trips throughout the desert, including his last one. Tray warranted a column of his own:

July 17, 1938. "A Little Entree," or "Peregrinations of a Padre's Pup." I understand I have had two or three predecessors, one Bevo, a Zip, Coso and Cuff. (The boss has a penchant for monosyllabic names for dogs. Claims he can call'em quicker. And can he call'em!) All of them except Bevo, who ate a loaded lamb-chop, were caught by automobiles. This explains why the Padre carried me across the street long after I could jump the curb. Wanted

to impress the danger upon me. So I wait for him now. Except, that is, when I step out by myself. I know this isn't right, and the Padre makes allowances for my visiting, but what is a fellow going to do when your friend lives on the west side of Main Street? Anyway, being white or mostly so, makes it easy to see me, and I stand less chance of being hit.

Mostly white. My mother was a Chihuahua, with brown spots. My father, they tell me, was a fox terrier, with a few black patches. I have my mother's ears and three black spots evenly distributed, one including each eye and ear, another three inches from the end of my spine. Promptly after Hugh Beatty had handed me over the Padre dubbed me "Tray." "How lovely," gushed a lady parishioner, "after 'My poor dog Tray,' of course." "Lovely nothing," grunted the boss. "Tray is the three-spot in the deck, madame. And moreover," he added, "he beats the deuce."

I smile when folks say, "How wonderful! Your dog stays in the car all night and never complains. And waits until you let him out in the morning. Marvelous!" They don't know the half of it. When the Padre was training me to do this particular chore and left me on the seat one night in Death Valley Junction just for pastime I tore a strip off the front seat upholstery for a couple of feet or so. The boss took one look at the cotton filling in the morning, slammed the door, and went for a long walk. It must have been a long walk, for he was gone nearly a half an hour before he came back, growled, "Get over," and drove off. He never mentioned the matter again. And I–I suppose because I found that it was only cotton batting underneath anyway–was fed up on upholstery. Leather, of course, is different. I found the leather on his breviary quite tasty one evening at Wildrose CCC camp, and had gotten as far as the *Gloria Patri* when he returned to the car. That time, however, something descended upon my posterior spot with precision and determination. After all, breviaries are for the clergy, not for the pupulace. (Sic.)

On the other hand, if he wants me to make the car my headquarters when we are on the road, why does he feel put out when I snap at some fellow who pokes his hand through the window to open the door? How am I to know that he is one of the leading parishioners, or a parking lot attendant? There was that day in Los Angeles when the Padre returned after a day of shopping to find the car just where he had left it, in the center of a parking lot at First and Hill, blocking traffic all day long. Not a man on the lot would come near it after I snarled at the first one. Padre says he doesn't see any sense in paying for parking any longer if I am going to take that attitude. He might as well leave his car in front of a fire plug and go his way, knowing that I will stand off the entire fire and police departments.

Odd how people comment on my relations with the cat. They seem to take it for granted that we should be enemies, instead of curling up side by side. But this cat is different. Well do I remember when I waddled into my new home two years ago how this grey tabby darted away and surveyed me

from beneath the couch. I was not even interested. He must have watched me for a week before he decided I was to be trusted, and as I was passing through the kitchen door one morning he bit me on the behind. Yes, I know it sounds queer, but by the Dog star, it is the truth. Just like a pal would do in a tussle on the lawn. That was the start, and ever since we gallop up and down stairs, under the furniture, and across the Padre as he lies asleep, each trying to get in the last dig. Then we sit down and rest together. Once in a while Kitty gives me a good wash, but I am not wild about it, because his tongue is too raspy. So I nip the end of his tail and we are off to the races again.

The Padre feeds us at different levels, not because we would bother one another, but because the doctor's brute, Scooter, who is big of heart but short on, shall we say, *savoir faire*? likes to sneak in for a free lunch. So the cat is fed on the office desk out of a pie plate, my meal being served on the floor. The plan works well save that Kitty seldom cleans up the plate and Padre doesn't think about it until some big shot comes in for a conference and apologizes, "So sorry. I didn't mean to interrupt your supper."

I ask you, am I to blame if my hair comes out? Or if it is so white that it shows particularly well on clerical clothes? Or if the only comfortable chair in the parlor is an armchair that I find most form-fitting, with the result that it is liberally lined with hairs for the unwary? Padre usually watches and warns the newcomers, but he must have been flustered the night Bishop Gorman stretched himself out in the seat, for he forgot to head him off. It was only when the Bishop stood in the hotel lobby later to register that the terrible truth came home to the boss. The prelate looked like he had rolled in a kennel. When they had retired to the Bishop's room the Padre told him the story and began to brush off the tell-tale white fibers. "What are you laughing at? You and your doggone dog!" admonished the successor of the Apostles. Said the Padre, "Why, it's funny. It couldn't be any funnier unless you were an Archbishop! Your Excellency, you've been be-Trayed!"

His knowledge and love of animals was proverbial. He observed their lifestyles and idiosyncrasies from the magnificent bighorn sheep to the dangerous tarantula and rattlesnake:

> *October 21, 1934.* Perhaps it is an improper digestion of highly seasoned western tales, or even the atmosphere supplied by the Santa Fe Railroad and the Harvey houses during the train-stops at Albuquerque and elsewhere; whatever it is, the average Eastern visitor to our land is filled with a wholesome fear of our flora and fauna. He is forever prepared to leap aside from the rattlesnakes that are supposed to lie in wait for us, and at night every inch of bedding must be searched for scorpions and tarantulas. And he is mightily disappointed if he must return to "civilization" without a thrilling escape from a sidewinder.

But in fact it is frequently difficult to satisfy these sensation hunters. We have rattlers, and I have seen and killed my share of them, but they do not seek man's company. One may travel from one end of Inyo to the other and never see a snake. Again, you may find one in your cot on your return.

The Padre has a gopher snake on his front lawn, and a gopher, too. Up to this writing he has not been able to arrange a meeting.

Tarantulas will leap two feet out of the rut to escape your onslaught. Scorpions will avoid you unless bothered. I watched a six-inch specimen commit hari-kari by stinging himself with his envenomed tail when he realized that he was a prisoner. Centipedes, thousand-legged worms, and the fastest traveler of them all, the orange-hued vinegaroon, excite no comment from the natives. Each carries a poison, but did you ever ride through a yellow-jackets' nest with a string of mules? Then you will never worry about lesser artillery.

There is no more eerie cry known to the dweller in the hills than the wail of a mountain lion. To be awakened from sleep for the first time by one of these cats screaming nearby is a good nerve tonic. We know of no better description than the common one of "it sounds like a woman in mortal agony." Yet even the cougar dodges your camp-fire, and many mountain inhabitants have never seen this animal.

But the gentleman who is not averse to being seen at a safe distance, and has no reserve whatsoever when it is a question of a vocal exhibition, is the jester of the wasteland, the coyote. His derisive laughter drives the dogs of the desert towns half-mad with rage. When they think they have located him his taunts break out from another ridge a half-mile away, while his companion is robbing the now unguarded hen-yard. He is a ventriloquist par excellence, and one of him sounds like a dozen. He will jog across the road in front of you at high noon, calmly turning around a hundred yards away to catalog you. Yet, he too, is no direct menace to man, save that he is a dangerous carrier of hydrophobia, and outbreaks of rabies have been traced to dogs having been bitten by these, their distant cousins.

In fine, the most dangerous creature at present at large in Inyo is the famed "black widow" spider. A recent importation, for none of the old-timers recall it, it has appeared in many parts of the Owens Valley. Its potency we know only by reports from places beyond the range. Perhaps this dangerous damsel, too, may prove to have been unduly publicized, like our local terrors. What Latin writer said, *Omne ignotum pro magnifico est?* "Everything unknown is held to be marvellous."

His admiration for the wisdom of nature's creatures is evident in the following note:

August 19, 1934. Twenty-seven pelicans flew over today, their flying forma-

tion a perfect chevron. Occasionally a gust of wind would swing them a few feet out of position but the gap would be closed in an instant. We have watched the Navy planes drill above San Diego, but the aviators had many a chalk-talk and long practice before they attained to even a modest imitation of these wonderful pelicans. Whether they had not heard that Owens Lake doesn't live there any more or not, the last I saw of them they were flapping their disconsolate way in that direction, following the white stripe of the Los Angeles highway. "Hew to the line, boys," I could imagine the squadron leader screaming, "let the fish fall where they may."

And a smaller bird captured his attention:

July 26, 1936. I spoke of the water ouzel. I saw one of them, the first in that region, splashing merrily in the pool at the foot of Whitney Falls the other day. The little rascal, a gun-metal hued bird of the size and family of our common blackbird, is a master of water sports. Like others of his tribe, he loves to kick up a spray as he splashes in a shallow spot near the shore, then to stand on a rock and preen. But he suddenly vanishes beneath the water's surface, and you hold your breath till he appears a minute or two later. He repeats the performance until he locates a filet mignon or some hors d'oeuvres in the mud, when he will skim along the stream's surface–cascades, falls, and all–with a dazzling grace, to disappear into his nest behind a watery wall. In a moment, his cheerful song announces that he is skipping the waves again. For him the business of living is a gladsome task. And who would not find it thus, cavorting on a mossy bank in a secluded dell away up there?

Even the lowly sparrow received an honorable mention in his column:

October 17, 1937. Not all animals, nor birds, have thus faded from the picture because of this mechanized age. I never cease to wonder at the adaptability of the comman sparrow, which in the opening years of the century was wont to follow the horses like seagulls do a steamer. But today, when Dobbin no longer showers his largesse for the benefit of the feathered kingdom, including the white-wings, the sparrow waits on city curbs and hops upon the warm radiator fronts of automobiles, thence to extract bees, flies, and grasshoppers that have been caught, done to a turn, and delivered to him by rapid transit.

Other birds that have adapted to the machine age are also noted:

October 17, 1937. Along the highway between Little Lake and Indian Wells of any morning each telephone pole is topped by one or more ravens, perched

there because there is no tree nearer than the rookery in which they breed, in the Coso hills 30 miles distant. From these lookouts they can spot the remains of luckless rabbits and squirrels that have dashed across the headlights' path once too often. It matters little that a car may race up while they feast–they zoom up in a bored way and return in a thrice. The auto literally keeps them fat. Buzzards, too, find savory pickings along the right of way, but their eyes are so keen that they have no difficulty in locating their meals in lonely reaches. Their slow circlings far above a dying victim, as if fastened by a string to an invisible hub around which they were whirled by centrifugal force, are among the familiar and troubling sights of the desert. The buzzard is the banshee of the wasteland.

A lone eagle slid off the slope as I drove down the Glacier road, and by effortless swerving into the rising currents lifted himself 200 feet into the sky. When I had fairly passed, he glided easily down to the road behind and soared along its course for a mile, following every bend, never climbing more than two feet above the surface. He, too, was looking for the morsels that mark the paths of the auto through the wilds. When the eagle stoops to ambulance chasing, romance is about dead.

He showed great concern for the fate of the elusive bighorn sheep:

February 21, 1937. One of the arguments for the enlargement of the Death Valley National Monument, a bill now awaiting executive action in Washington, is the protection of wildlife in that region. The rangers point out that unless the western boundaries of the Monument are extended to at least the 7,000-foot contour on the Panamint range they are helpless to prevent poachers shooting mountain sheep and transporting the carcasses down any of the numerous canyons debouching westward into Panamint Valley. There is no question about the existence of these poachers–the presence of sheep heads and horns about the water holes silently testify that even the danger of a $500 fine and imprisonment is not enough to deter them. Apparently it is the quest for fresh meat that animates these predatory gentlemen, an expensive taste, for, if they were caught, it would have been cheaper to purchase an equivalent weight in filet mignon or even *pate de foie gras*, with cover charge and dancing included.

The desert bighorn is related to the Rocky Mountain sheep, to those of the Sierra Nevada and of Arizona and Northern Sonora. The species *Ovis nelsoni* is practically confined to the desert ranges of Inyo, although it is believed that these animals crossed from the Inyo Mountains to the Sierra and vice versa within the memory of living men, even if there is no record of such migration recently. Whether the sheep extricated from the aqueduct near Cottonwood last year, which perished later from the exposure incident to that experience, was crossing the valley or fell in when storms

in the higher passes drove the band down to the sagebrush will never be known. Probably the ancestors of the bighorn were the Marco Polo sheep and argali of Asia, which made their way over the ice of Bering Strait to the American continent.

The name "bighorn" is apt. The male bears horns that, with his head, weigh from one-fifth to one-fourth of his entire weight, which will average a little more than 150 pounds. Because the horns circle back upon themselves, so that the points come almost to the level of the jaw, it can be seen how difficult it would be for them to be damaged in combat, as some writers have imagined had occurred after they had found broken specimens along the trails or by a spring. The fact is that the male uses his horns to pry between rocks and into barrel cacti and other possible hiding places of succulent bulbs or water in times or places of scarcity. That combats do occur is recorded, however, by trustworthy witnesses, particularly in the rutting season, and I imagine the last word in thrills would be the beholding of two battering rams meeting head-on on the brink of a mountain chasm. It would answer once and for all the knotty problem of our high school physics class,"What happens when an irresistible force meets an immovable body?"

A mountain sheep is an eagle on hoofs. No other animal so nearly parallels the eagle in his habitat, on the dizziest crags of remote fastnesses, nor comes nearer to flying. The sheep climb what seem impossible cliffs and drop 20 or 30 feet with the ease of the Ballet Russe. Strangely enough, the golden eagle is the bighorn's worse enemy. For when the ewes bring forth their one or two young on lonely pinnacles visible only to God, it is the eagle alone or in pairs, that swoops down on the helpless lambs and carries them off to the eyrie, or picks out the eyes or other tender morsels if the animal is too heavy to bear away.

While sheep, the bighorn are not covered with wool. Their hide and hair are much like those of the mule deer, the color ranging from a dirty white or gray to a light brown. I heard Ray Goodwin describe the texture as that of a white-mustached desert rat who chewed tobacco. Their long, narrow hoofs are cupped and equipped with a form of brake, a rubbery substance that holds them on steep grades. But in loose snow the sheep suffer, and frequently lose their lives in deep drifts. Mary Austin relates in *The Land of Little Rain* how five of them thus perished at the mouth of Oak Creek after a week of wet snow. The same author tells also of finding the skull of a ram fastened by the horns to a tree in the Sierra, having become entangled in the bole, and there the poor creature struggled and starved until death brought relief.

While it is estimated that there are about 3,000 mountain sheep in these parts, fortunate indeed is the man who has seen even one. Their inaccessible habitat and their keen sight and smell keep them out of reach of the average tourist. It is only the persistent mountaineer, who waits along the

water trails or by remote springs where they visit after dusk, who is rewarded for his enterprise. Dr. Russell, director of wildlife of the National Park Service, and his California representative, E. Lowell Sumner, Jr., both of whom are active in the protection of the bighorn, confided to me recently that they had never seen one. Ray Goodwin, Superintendent of Death Valley Monument, has seen several in the Panamints, and Ranger Shellabarger has sighted a flock of them in the Sierra near here. Of course the horns are often found, and many pairs grace dens and living rooms throughout Inyo. Have I seen one? Strict honesty compels me to answer "yes" and "no." I saw the sheep that had fallen into the aqueduct, but I have never beheld one on the hoof. However, I know a place…

Panamint George, an old Indian who lives in what is known as the Indian Ranch in Panamint, thought it would be profitable and otherwise contribute to his peace of soul to purchase a flock of goats and allow them to forage in the upper reaches of the Panamint mountains in the summer, keeping them on the ranch or environs in the colder months. So he bought him a herd, or rather bought his buxom daughters a herd, and sent both goats and mahales into the hills, where the quadrupeds browse and the bipeds drowsed and wove baskets. But you cannot be too careful even with goats, it seems, for who should return to the ranch in the fall with the herd but a statuesque bighorn ram, and proceeded to make himself one of the family. While more timid than the domesticated beasts, he was quite amenable to attention, and remained in the valley all winter. Came the spring and he followed his companions to the hills. But that fall a strange thing happened. Upon the downward trek he again accompanied them, but once at the home base he began to raise hell in general. He chased Old George over a few fences and met George's daughter on the western front, while she was tying her shoelace and facing east. His conduct became so outrageous that Panamint George was weighing the risk of shooting a mountain sheep when lo! another bighorn ram appeared on the scene and sought out his familiar corner. It was the original Enoch Arden. The rambunctious gentleman had been a dastardly interloper.

After having written frequently about fish and fishing, he reported on other sundry encounters with the animal kingdom:

> *July 16, 1939.* Lest those who do not care for fish think I have leaned too far on the piscatorial side of Inyo these past days, may I add a census of the birds and beasts that have crossed my wandering path within the month? There was that sage hen up in Long Valley that insisted on playing cripple in the middle of the highway until I stopped and discovered she was trying to distract me from the brood that had just gained the roadside. She flew off protesting as soon as I drew near. This trick was attempted by a hen

pheasant on the station road at Lone Pine yesterday, and her six youngsters certainly played possum as long as they dared. The quail dare all with their multitudinous little ones, dragging them across the traffic stream at hair-raising moments. The grouse up at Whitney Portal is the calmest of all, nonchalantly strutting about your path, followed by her twins, like barnyard fowl. Her husband certainly drummed away a merry spring on a hollow log up there, for he could be heard on any afternoon until July. The little Panamint owls are out again, risking their necks on the asphalt. And less than a month ago, a golden eagle rose from the highway near Division Creek as I approached. He had been feasting, side by side with a magpie, on a dead rabbit. The snakes–king, gopher, and rattler–have all paid toll to the auto this summer, as have lizards and the little antelope squirrels. In the morning the coyotes lope across your way, especially about Manzanar. And late one night a civet cat scurried up the granite shoulder of the Whitney Portal road, while another evening my blood pressure mounted several degrees in an instant at the edge of Mono Lake as the headlights revealed a skunk loitering in the middle of the road. We missed each other by a nose. Thus far for zoology to July 9, inclusive.

The Padre himself had an encounter with a more common member of the animal kingdom:

September 22, 1935. On a trip to the high country, the Padre's horses thrice tried to rid himself of his rider by rolling on him. But the Padre rolled his own and escaped. Al Lackey of the old Barton cow camp on Roaring River remarked, "That horse must have some hatred for the Catholic clergy. Perhaps he belongs to another Church." "Yes," agreed the Padre, "he seems to be a wholly roller."

He sang the praises of the relative of the horse and mule, namely the burro:

February 23, 1936. February *Westways*, official publication of the Automobile Club of Southern California, contains the item: "Several more treasure-seekers in quest for gold buried by the Franciscans were entrapped in Los Angeles during December." Also an article by Idwal Jones "Luck and the Kicking Burro," dealing with the old desert tradition that *equus asinus* has a nose for gold. As Frank Dobie writes in his fascinating monograph on lost mines of the West, *Coronado's Children*: "Coyotes and burros seem to have directed more prospectors to 'pay' than all the practical geologists combined." So to the Los Angeles delvers the gibe should be appropriate: "Get a burro!" In fact, such good use did St. Francis make of the burro in his simile of body and soul, the donkey and his rider, making their joint way to

heaven that–please don't take it amiss–I am reminded of a burro whenever I meet a Franciscan.

Idwal Jones discounts the burro's knowledge of ore attributing the association of the lowly brute with such discoveries to the fact that the prospector's life is largely ruled by chance, and the wandering burro symbolizes blind luck. There is much philosophy here, for the straying beasts have led their owners up many otherwise unexplored canyons in search of their foraging quadrupeds. I am certain that most of the "finds" uncovered in this fashion were preceded by sulfuric speech of a hue with the volcanic walls that echoed it. "I have been prospectin' these hills for nigh 40 years," replied an old desert rat to a tenderfoot's query. Then he caught himself. "Not exactly 40, though. About 30 of them years I spent lookin' for burros; the rest I spent prospectin'."

"Sabe the burro?" is an old byword. But who does understand the burro? Not the miner, whose inseparable crony he has been for as many years as men have sought gold in western wastes. Not the packer, who rents him out to the unsuspecting hiker or fisherman determined to go it alone. Certainly not the tourist, who gazes upon him and his kin in some rockstrewn wash where he apparently finds enough nutrition to keep him forever fit. He has been damned without reservation and held in reverential awe. He will stand in one position for hours, "with no more concept of the time-flow than a Chinese philosopher," yet he will be as prompt as the rising sun at your campfire if you begin to set aside a flapjack or two for him in the morning. He is harmless as a child, but will crush the life out of a dog he does not like in a flashing leap. He will watch your packing and listen to your objurgations with aggravating equanimity, then drive you mad by bursting forth in an ear-shattering "hee-haw" a half-hour later. A desert man seeking demeaning epithets does not call his enemy "an ass." Those of us who have looked long and often into the unrevealing eyes of a burro, and have sensed therein the wisdom of the years, consider him complimented who is classed with our desert canary.

Someone recently asked in a magazine article: "Have you ever seen a dead burro?" I have yet to meet a man in Inyo who has seen one, save, of course, those slaughtered by intrepid hunters for fox-farm and poultry-yard feed. If he dies, and there are many of us here who doubt it, his carcass must be transported to some asinine Nirvana or Avalon by the jinn to look out for such things. For, his grave is like the grave of Moses; no man has seen where he lies. Old Red, solitary survivor of the animals that once packed ore from the Minnietta mine, still browses on the old dumps at the tunnel mouths in the Argus range, and men who knew him in the hey-day of the mine tell me he must have lived there at least 40 years. Sphinx-like he stands on a deserted terrace and gazes meditatively across to the Panamints. He has seen booms and depressions, life and love, hatred and death.

Perhaps his lonely guffaw is his puckish comment on the ways of men: "What fools these mortals be!" When the millennium comes, I have a feeling Old Red will be around somewhere.

The Irish people have a great respect for the donkey. They see in the cross that marks the back of each a symbol of the Savior, who deigned to ride into Jerusalem on one of them. A donkey, too, tradition tells, served to carry Mary on her journey with Joseph to the cave of the Nativity, and there only the ox shared with the ass the privilege of representing the brute world at the birth of its God. The Jews, who had been previously accused by Tacitus and others of onolatry, or ass-worship, in turn accused the early Christians of this practice, and caricatures unearthed in Italian excavations represent Christians adoring a crucified donkey. While in the catacombs themselves, Christ is represented as preaching against Satan, or heresy, depicted as an ass. Anybody who has ever endeavored to keep a burro on the right path, literally or figuratively, will have no quarrel with the last two characterizations. He is frequently diabolical and always non-conformist.

But it was Balaam's garrulous beast, with his classic rebuke to cruel masters, that lifted the burro into the social register. It placed him on a par with the prophets of the Messias, and he was portrayed by a wooden counterpart, from the depths of which an actor spoke in the miracle play representing these prophets in the Middle Ages. So popular did he become that his part was gradually disassociated from the rest and became the occasion of the "Feast of the Asses," which we find celebrated by priest and people alike in the 13th century. In Beauvais, on the Feast of the Flight into Egypt, a beautiful girl with a pretty child in her arms was led upon a richly caparisoned wooden donkey to St. Stephen's Church. The ass was placed in the sanctuary and Mass was sung. How far we have come from those days of simple joys and sanctification of the commonplace!

The burro was an almost inexhaustible source of stories:

November 3, 1935. Tom Millay was his name, from Tipperary and the Mother Lode. He stopped to saw a little wood, shared a cup of Java with Mickey the Mope, and then packed his bed roll athwart his bending shoulders and headed for Death Valley. "There might be something good up around Telescope Peak. I'll do a little prospecting up there for a bit." And he pulled his black hat down over his ears–it had been a gift from some padre up in Sonora country–and left us. But, before going, he enriched us with a tale of an experience culled from 70 years in the byways of the world. He was tramping through the desert one morning when the sound of voices brought him to a halt. At first, he thought several people were engaged in a lively discussion, as question and answer floated into the air from behind a sand-dune. He finally decided that there could not be more than two in the argument,

as he heard: "Ye stick with me and ye'll be rich. Ye'll have butlers to wait on ye, all ye can eat, an' ye'll never have to walk another mile as long as ye live. Diamonds? Say, I'll dress ye in diamonds, and make ye a bed of softest down. Now listen to me..." Tom Millay ventured 'round the dune and found another old Irish sourdough like himself, talking to his burro, his sole audience. "What are ye talkin' to that dumb baste like that for?" "Well, it's like this. In the mornin' I give him a hot-cake or two and then I tell him how well off he's goin' to be if he sticks with me. This keeps him here listenin' to me. Otherwise he'd be roamin' all over the damn desert and I'd never ketch him." Campaign promises, as it were.

Bill Reid of the Panamint Springs service station had a bone to pick with burros:

> *December 25, 1938.* Burros are a different matter. I think I set down once that the day after Bill painted the roofs of his new establishment green half a dozen wild burros moved in, afraid that this was an oasis they had overlooked. But they have not moved out, and, since Bill decided to beautify his immediate desert by planting a handful of mulberry trees, the burros will probably never leave. Neither will the trees, Bill thinks, for the asses have chewed the shoots and the twigs and much of the bark from his intended forest. He tried selling the brutes to Andrus Osborne, but the purchaser could not catch up with his merchandise. In despair he spoke about shooting them, but a passerby told him such was against the law, and that the district attorney would be particularly ferocious with anybody caught destroying such picturesque fauna as wild asses. Bill wrote to the gentleman, George Francis, somewhat as follows: "Dear Mr. District Attorney: I understand you are in favor of preserving wild burros. I too am in favor of preserving them–in formaldehyde."
>
> I once asked if anyone had ever seen a dead burro, and up to a week ago had never received an affirmative answer. Then Ted Smith assured me that he had, and that it was the corpse of Old Red, an animal that had frequented the vicinity of the Minnietta mine for over 40 years. He lies today at the foot of the wash leading down from his old stamping ground, on his hocks a pair of self-imposed bracelets. In pawing over the dumps for possible tidbits he often stepped into tin cans which he could not dislodge. After a little his hoof would push the bottom out of the can, and the remainder would slip up his leg, there to remain until some passing miner would come to his assistance. Tomatoes, salmon,–condensed milk perhaps; whatever they contained, they now grow brown in the repeating suns of Panamint, gyves upon the bleaching bones, of him who laughed at man for nearly half a century.
>
> Old Red's death reminds me that he lived in Panamint in the days of the

Greenwater boom, when Schwab and Clark and other millionaires sought copper here. Perhaps it was Old Red that inspired C.B. Glasscock to write in his *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* up at Greenwater in 1907, "The prospector is the variable star of the desert; the burro is the fixed member of the constellation," and "Give a million to the man who has spent part of his life punching an ass across the desert, and he will forthwith become an ass himself."

On the origin of burros in the desert, Inyokel explained:

February 19. 1939. A line in fine print in this guide (*The WPA Guide to Death Valley*) answered a question I had never asked, "Where did our burros come from?" The writer credits these ships of the desert to the Spaniards, who also brought the horse to California. I must tell George Francis about that. George is our district attorney, and I have mentioned him in relation to wild asses before. Hearsay, perhaps, but it is rumored abroad that he championed the cause of the lowly companion of Balaam in a weak moment, and has since had to bear the slings and arrows of outrage unfortunates like Bill Reid. Bill is still standing guard over his mulberry trees at Panamint Springs, torn between desperation at the quadrupeds which kick over his garbage every night and fear of the tourists who think the stony-faced beasts "just darling."

I wonder whether George has heard that the Death Valley Monument boys are having a tough time keeping the valley signposted? Where trees are forty miles apart a firm white pole is a boon to itchy burros, besides providing an occasional bite or two of breakfast food. Or has it filtered through to him that the Great White Father in Washington has sent two or three experts to us to discover (a) if there are really wild burros here, (b) how many? and (c) what to do? Without doubt two or three White Papers, or perhaps Pinto Papers, in re: "Donkeys" already repose on the President's desk. Donkeys should interest our Chief Democrat. I look for the asses to reach the floor of congress any day. Wouldn't it be a strange prank of fortune if Inyo's young district attorney should ride to Washington on his burros? Stevenson, Sancho Panza, St. Francis, Balaam–the list of donkey lovers grows. Ride 'em, George!

A miner springs to defend the tradition that nobody has ever seen a dead burro by explaining that Old Red, the ancient beast whose demise was recorded herein a month or so ago, did not die from natural causes. It appears that the prospectors at the Minnietta were in the habit of leaving a tub of water outside the door of the cook-shack for Red's use when he felt a thirst coming on. The old hand whose duty this was moved away for a spell, the newcomer forgot it, and the ancient brute was forced to drink of the waste water in the tank by the Little Johnny Mine half a mile below. But the tank contained cyanide of potassium, which dropped him in his tracks. Thus

another desert legend remains unsullied. Nobody has ever seen a burro dead from disabilities that would ordinarily be included in a wild ass's life insurance policy.

The *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* in March, 1907, printed the following: "Elegy Written in the Desert." Since the editor made no apologies, I presume none is called for.

The burro tolls the knell of parting day,
And with his tail shoos one lone fly away.
Then nods his head, and pricks his ears the while
And wonders shall he walk another mile.

The silent herd winds slowly o'er the sand
The man behind–he will not understand
That burros do not wish to climb a hill
When they might just as well be standing still.

And so the outfit plods its weary way
Into the hills, where precious metals may
Lie buried; and the hills are just ahead,
But tired burros might as well be dead.

So, as the sun behind the hill drops down,
The burros cease their toil and turn around,
And with one last despairing bray
Lie down to rest until another day!

On re-reading the troubles of District Attorney Francis with burros, I am afraid I have been a little hard on him. He probably had secret reasons for being kind to dumb animals. He may even have remembered the time he clashed with the all-powerful Church of Rome on the rights of brute creation. And remembering he probably shuddered. For in those days Juan De la Cerda and his wife and a houseful of children lived in the shack at the desert's edge behind the Keeler roundhouse. Because of the children, or because he was a fancier, De la Cerda kept goats. Or rather, he didn't keep them. For they wandered all over town, seeking such tidbits as they could find on clothes lines, in garbage cans and dumps. This was bad enough, but when a particularly playful old billy hid in the post office and played Chinese checkers with stooping patrons peering into the mail-boxes somebody complained to the district attorney. He reported it to the sheriff, who could not corral the goats, but warned the owner. But the "Button, button, who's got the button" business continued, so George was forced to indict a stiff epistle to De la Cerda. That gentleman promptly replied that "the district attorney had better watch his P's and Q's, that De la Cerda had no

intention of keeping his goats at home, and if the law mentioned the matter again he would tell the Padre about it, and then where would George Francis be?" So you see how things are.

In a follow-up on the above columns, he added:

March 5, 1939. And so help me, if George Francis' wild asses have not gone to Washington! Ray Goodwin picked up the Register, laughed at the asinine column, and turned it over to Ickes' (Secretary of the Interior, Harold Ickes) traveling secretary, one McGee, for perusal by the cabinet member. McGee reported that Ickes was vastly amused. I hope this good news will cheer up District Attorney George Francis, whom the grapevine tells me is trying to rent column space in a local contemporary to defend himself against anonymous yokels. If your donkey can make Ickes laugh, George, and if Ickes' smile can raise the corners of Hitler's mouth a mite, why, doggone it, we may yet make an ass of the bird of peace!

The Padre and Inyokel had differing views on how to manage a recalcitrant burro:

March 26, 1939. I confess and will not deny that there was malice aforethought in my flattening out the old copy of the *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* and leaving it where the Padre would see it as he picked up his breviary. "The Burro Discusses Profanity" was written to order for my side of a debate that has gone on, oh these many years, between myself and the pastor as to the efficacy of a few well-chosen and judiciously sprinkled cuss words for the speeding up of life on the great American desert. I have held out for strong language, believing that there is no other way for helpless humans to retain their mastery over dumb creation. The Padre has been obdurate in his insistence that nothing justifies the blistering invective used by old-time muleskinners. "And I've heard some pretty fair samples," he hastens to add, as if fearing that I would ask what was the matter with "You_____" for instance.

I watched him peruse the essay swiftly at first, then deliberately with the corners of his mouth creeping up. "Ha, ha, Inyokel. Good stuff! More grist for you mill, eh? Well, I think you are wasting your time. And so is your friend the burro." He referred to the animal in the article, which purports to be a conversation between a prospector and his toothful four-footed partner. The desert rat is telling the burro that he has read in *The Daily Cacti* that a man was struck by lightning near Welcome Springs while swearing at his mules. The burro refuses to credit this, since he has known cuss words in seven languages before he ever carried a pack. He heard them all applied to his mother. "Surely no Divine Providence, with an appreciation of the desert such as one must have had to make it, could fail to see the necessity

of cuss words in order to continue life here as it should be continued. No good and just God would make desert and mules, and skinners to drive 'em, and then put a crimp in the whole game by killin' the skinner for talkin' to the mules in the only language they can understand. Do you suppose a mule would know what to do when a skinner addressed him with: 'Dorothy, my dear, would you be kind enough to remove your hoof from that nearest trace chain, and having finished your survey of the valley, proceed with your onward march!' Well, hardly. Dorothy would think she had a new driver and would at once take the opportunity to kick her mate over the bank, tangle the harness, and knock hell out of the wagon with her two hind feet. You couldn't blame Dorothy. You wouldn't know what to do yourself if someone told you in Chinese there was a big gold strike in Kalamazoo. Now if the driver says: 'Gid up, Doll! Damn your old rat-tailed carcass. Untangle that hoof, you slab-sided, good-for-nothin', sage-eatin', raw-boned, ring-tailed, long-eared bunch of meanness,' then you can see the team start. Of course it starts. It knows what's wanted, and it moves on... . " Cogent, I calls it, but the shepherd of the desert just chuckled, thumbed through his prayer book, blessed himself, and was soon out of my ken.

I recalled the time I had brought home the tale of the poor tenderfoot stuck in the sand with his mules and wagon. Nary a step would the beasts take, and he had used up all the coaxin' he had with him. Along came old Alkali Ike, whose voice is well nigh gone, eaten out by soda dust and what it takes to wash soda dust out of your tonsils. He took in the stranger's plight, sidled up to the animals, and just whispered in their off ears. Away they tugged, and in no time the outfit was on its way out of there. "Are you sure Ike didn't say an aspiration, or 'Remember the Maine?'" was all the Padre would answer.

I found an unexpected ally in Senator Key Pittman of Nevada, who told us a tale down at Furnace Creek about his experiences in Alaska. He had stumbled through a blizzard to discover another musher on the trail at a steep spot, a poor meek gentleman who was having no luck at all in getting his dogs to struggle out of the hole into which they had fallen. The future senator took the reins in hand and cut loose with a volley of epithets that thawed the ice for yards around, galvanizing the malamutes into feverish activity. "That's the way to handle 'em," he confided, turning to the waiting driver. "Oh, but sir," came the answer, "You should not do that. As a minister of the Lord I could not use such language, and I do not think the Master intended that any of us should thus abuse His creatures." Pittman was taken aback, but made the best of it and soon passed on with his string of dogs into the storm. Just a year or so later he was overtaken on the trail by a swift-moving outfit, the driver's voice cutting though the night like a knife in splendidly polished descriptions of the infamous blood that flowed in his dog's veins. Pittman gasped, for he recognized the preacher of

yesteryear. "Well, you see, I have found out that this is the only language these brutes understand. These words convey a definite meaning to them, and surely the good Lord will not call it swearing when you use words which have two meanings, one for the world, the other for the dog?"

But do you think even the chairman of the foreign relations committee convinced the Padre? Rather did he come back with "Exactly. The dogs and the burros have learned from their teachers that certain words or certain garnishings of language mean definite demands, and they respond accordingly. But if the poor dumb brutes had been taught by masters who themselves did not know, or," and he cast an eye at me, "or did not care to use profanity, the animals would react just as quickly to decent language. Remember that all Daniel O'Connell did to silence the vile-mouthed Dublin fish-wife was to denominate her as a parallelepidon, or something like that. Try that on your donkey, Inyokel!"

The next mention of the burros was a follow-up on a previous column, and also referred to another one written about Catholic nuns:

> *April 23, 1939.* Alas for the perversity of human nature! A few weeks ago I wrote herein about nuns. I set down some observations which go contrary to the notion of nuns held generally by those outside the Church, and perhaps by many within, After I had sent the lines speeding on their way I felt troubled. What would *Register* readers think? Would they crumble the paper in a ball and stuff it in the stove shouting "That desert rat's got religion! Phooey! Imagine a hard-rock miner talking about convents!" Like the prospector who came back disgusted from the Weepah strike ten years ago. He quit when he found hawkers selling Kewpies in the streets. "Nuns, bah!" But it was too late to stop it then, and I merely resolved to stick to the rougher side of life henceforth, leaving the flowers of civilization to be displayed by defter fingers. But I have heard from three non-Catholics about that very column, asserting that it "has given me a new slant on the whole business of convents;" " your approach to the subject was extraordinary" and "up to a year ago I thought that the crosses nuns wore at their belts concealed daggers. Now your article is a revelation."
>
> Even more recently, I put in print an argument with the Padre on the utility of a few mouth-filling and soul-satisfying cuss-words when talking to a burro or mule. I felt only thus could I set myself aright with my disgusted he-men readers, men who knew the desert and its ways. This would take the taste of the convent confectionery out of their mouths. But I shuddered for fear I should fall foul of those other devout creatures into whose hands the paper must fall, for there are many of them on the mailing list. What if I should scandalize some of these little ones? Was ever an agony of indecision like mine? Yet to this hour I have got no word from a grizzled

mule-skinner or weary prospector about my attempted defense of strong language. But I have just been informed that a mother superior in a respectable religious community read the entire article to her sisters, "dropping her voice so as to take the part of Dorothy, the mule, in the most comical fashion," and finishing among peals of laughter. Now what, gentle reader–I refer now of course to that reader who neither reads these lines between the curtains of a wimple nor drips tobacco juice down his beard while spelling out the longer words–what would you do if you had an audience like mine has proved to be? Would you play to the gallery, to the orchestra circle, or to the manager in the wings? Or is there an answer?

7

SHEPHERD OF SOULS

What of Father Crowley's priestly duties? His ordinary routine by 1935 was to say Sunday Mass at Lone Pine at 7:30 and then at Bishop at l0 a.m., reversing the order of Masses every Sunday. During the winter months he also attended to the needs of the Catholics in Death Valley Junction, Furnace Creek and those of the CCC boys in various locations–Cow Creek in the winter and Wildrose in the summer, those stationed at Lone Pine and at Mammoth. Towards the end of the decade he often said Mass in private homes in Bridgeport and Lee Vining, both towns located in the northern County of Mono.

There were baptisms and first communions to prepare for, visits of the Bishop for confirmations, weddings to perform and funerals. His sermons were especially touching when he personally knew the deceased and the family. In addition he organized retreats for women and for men, often at Glacier Lodge west of Big Pine. He wrote to Ralph Merritt "Ralph, please do everything you can to be here, for soul, body and temporalities. I can guarantee but one result of the retreat–peace. Don't you need a little? Let me hear from you."[59] And Ralph was not a Catholic. One can just imagine the invitation he made to Catholics.

That he was available to all, even non-Catholics, is evident in the following story of an eleven year old girl. She remembers that in 1939 she was living in the small town of Cartago attending a small one-room schoolhouse. During recess she joined her classmates in a game of baseball. As she was guarding home plate, an older and much larger boy fell on her and she sustained an open fracture of her lower leg. It took five hours for a doctor to arrive, put her to sleep and set the bone. When she awoke, she found herself in the tiny two-room Lone Pine Hospital, about 20 miles to the north. Here she was lost, lonely, afraid and in a lot of pain. Her parents had no vehicle so she had no visitors. The only other patient was a man in the next room injured in a rodeo fall, also with a broken leg. She says "it must have been the special of the week." Although she was not a Catholic, Father Crowley visited her daily, some-

times twice a day during her ten-day stay. He wiggled her toes, brought her "funnies" and talked to her about things that interested her. She never forgot the kindly Padre. As she says, "I fell in love with him."

The Shoshone Indians at the time lived in huts in canyons in the Panamint Mountains and at Indian Ranch. They were not forgotten. Mat Perez, who worked for the Department of Public Works, often saw the Padre on his way to Death Valley bringing them medicines and food that he had begged from the McLean Pharmacy and stores in Lone Pine.

The Paiute Indians farther to the north were also a concern. Since the water supply on the farms and ranches where they worked had given out, this type of employment was no longer available. To help them out of their poverty Father Crowley recommended a program which would allow them to make and sell their elegantly-woven Paiute baskets to tourists.

Father Crowley's own spirituality was probably similar to that taught by the Jesuits whose founder, St.Ignatius, had been a soldier. A book, *The Science of Spiritual Life*, was apparently his constant companion from seminary days and was well used. The cover of the spine was missing, and the book was ink-stained and worn. His name and "1915" were inscribed on the title page. Several passages were marked in pencil for emphasis and short comments made in the margins. The book by Father Clare, S.J. is based on the spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius. The meditation on the object and use of creatures was marked: "For material things cannot satisfy man's soul, nor temporal things content an immortal being: but they are provided for man's use in the execution and attainment of that for which he is made, as the steps of a ladder by which he may ascend to his home ... if He supplies me with the creatures which belong to Him, that I may make use of them for that purpose only, it follows that my use of them must be regulated solely by the extent to which they enable me to fulfill this end; and just as the artist employs his colors, or the artisan his tools only so far as they help him in the execution of his design, in like manner must I also be guided in regard to the use of everything."[60] Father Crowley used his fertile imagination to put these tools in the service of the grand design.

In the chapter on the Kingdom of Christ he attached a clipping from the *Atlantic Monthly* (date unknown) regarding heroes, where the author refers to the Italian hero, Garibaldi and notes his appeal "to the battalions of young men upon whom he called to do the impossible. Of that scene the historian Trevelyan, writes:

" 'In that stillness of the tempest, the sonorous thrilling voice was heard to the outskirts of the vast crowd.

" 'Fortune, who betrays us today, will smile on us to-morrow. I am going out from Rome. Let those who wish to continue the war against the stranger come with me. I offer neither pay nor quarters nor provision. I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles and death. Let him who loves his country with his heart and not with his lips only, follow me.'

" 'Hunger, thirst, forced marches, battles, death. Such was the offer, nothing more.'

"No such sacrifices are demanded of us, thank God! I cite the striking passage simply to show that no selfish interest can make an appeal to manhood comparable to the call of devotion to a higher cause."[61]

And for Father Crowley, the higher cause was his priesthood and all that it entailed in the service of God and man, often even hunger, thirst and forced marches. This quotation appealed to this "strong warrior."

In the chapter on Jesus' appearance on the Sea of Tiberias after His resurrection, the Padre underlined: "As long as we are labouring for souls we are like fishermen on the sea, filled with anxiety, overwhelmed with toil, and surrounded by cares and works of charity, and when this is over we must get to shore, in some convenient place with Jesus; we must look to ourselves and gain new strength, lest while preaching to others we ourselves become castaways."[62]

In regard to his own choice of priestly celibacy, one of his parishioners ventured to inquire. Margaret Phillips wrote in *Desert* magazine:

"Because he was so obviously fitted by disposition to make a fine husband and father, I once asked him if he missed the family he might have had. In his reply to this direct question, he gave the only admission of loneliness which I ever knew him to make. 'Yes,' he said. 'No man ever enters the priesthood without the consciousness of a great sacrifice. But if I had a family of my own, I could not possibly be "Father" to everyone as I am now. I don't even dare to become intimate with any special friends, or some others of my people might feel that my attention was all taken up and that I had no time for their problems.'"[63]

An innovation in the diocese was the institution of "Vacation schools". He told how they came about in his own parish:

> *August 18, 1935.* The Padre tells me it was a Bishop, or rather they made him a Bishop since on account of it, who thought up the idea of religious vacation schools. His name was O'Hara, a priest in Eugene, Ore., and he was convinced that the long-current notion that children needed and enjoyed three months of summer idleness was false. He enlisted the aid of some nuns and put his theory into practice. He succeeded, and told the world.

Even the ecclesiastical world was slow to believe him, however. "What? Drag children to school in the hot summer days and teach them catechism, when we find it hard enough to hold them for half an hour on Sundays now? Ridiculous!" But others tried, and found that the plan worked.

Then the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine took it up, and the seminarians and the religious orders of women, particularly those devoted to catechetical work. Father O'Hara was made a Bishop, and his diocese, that of Great Falls, Mont., was the first in which every parish held a summer religious school. Bishop Gorman followed suit in Nevada. He opens the work each year with a solemn service in the Cathedral, which all the teachers attend. He perennially visits every school in the session. This year the number of schools in the Monterey-Fresno diocese doubled, and we note that the Bishop of Denver, where seminarians pioneered in this field, has announced that catechetical work will be undertaken on a diocesan scale this fall. So the idea of the mild-mannered man from Eugene has taken root and flourished like the mustard-seed.

The Padre admits that he was one of the skeptics when he heard Bishop O'Hara detail the vacation school program years ago. But he is honest enough to admit that he was all wet, or whatever it is that padres are when they don't know what they are talking about. For he has tried vacation schools in a parish with a splendid parish school, and in a parish where many of the pupils had never seen a priest previous to the opening of classes, and the children came, and wanted more. Nor has distance from the center rendered the school impractical, for in Inyo more than 50 children were brought from distances of 15 or 16 miles and returned each day in borrowed cars. Nor did summer suns faze the teachers or pupils. The thermometer really begins to function in Inyo at about 100, and in Keeler, 120 is quite common while little voices sing, "Ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide." Teachers, too, sprang from nowhere; two Sisters of the Holy Family from San Francisco, Sisters de Chantal and Virginia; two Jesuit scholastics from Santa Clara, Messrs. Kern and Crowley; the president and vice president of the diocesan confraternity, Misses Margaret Farrant and Margaret Mooney, and adequate local assistants, such as Misses Lucy Brichaga, Rose and Dora Rodriguez, and Louise Perez, and Mrs. Louis Jobin and Mrs. Alma Keleher. Names do not mean much to those outside our borders. We mention them only that their example may hearten others who fear that these things cannot be done. The Padre admits that it cost him many an hour of trepidation before he dared to run four vacation schools in one parish simultaneously, at Bishop, Independence, Keeler and Death Valley. But he says that after you dive in the water is fine. You are so busy then that you have no time to worry. And you are so wrapped up in pictures and prayers and prizes that you forget the heat and the dust and the distances.

Some features of the schools struck this poor uninitiate as unique. A school

in view of the top of the United States, another at the very bottom, Death Valley, at the same time and in the same parish, are out of the ordinary. At Bishop, the sisters lived in a Protestant's house, drove a car donated for their use by a Protestant, used American Legion benches for their classes, and were present at the closing First Communion breakfast in the Episcopalian church, served on dishes from the Methodist church. In Independence, the school met in the Methodist church, donated for the session by the trustees, and in Death Valley the Pacific Coast Borax Company opened the public school for the classes. And when I counted the number of Protestant youngsters who never missed a class I mused that in Inyo, at least, the chickens of Bishop O'Hara's dad had come home to roost. (His father had his sons attend Lutheran summer bible school in a Norwegian region of the midwest).

Of course, the reckless soul who would attempt vacation schools in the wasteland must have an abiding sense of humor. Else he will go mad. He must be able to sing *O Maria, Madre Mia* when a tire pops as he is racing in with a load of moppets, piled three deep. Nor should he lose his poise, when, as he is seated on the steps of an Indian shack explaining the Incarnation to a first communicant, the family pig decides to chew the strap off his puttees. Chickens strolling up the aisle in search of stray crumbs might upset the city pastor; the vacation-schooling missionary should seize the opportunity to dwell on God's providence. When the kid that a devoted boy brought for the Nativity tableau has to have his jaws tightly held to prevent his bleating, and manages to get a bleat in anyway, the successful pastor manages to retain a sphinx-like expression. Nor does he see "Swift's Premium" on Joseph's work bench, and he is oblivious to "First Grade Potatoes" on the shepherd's burnoose. He is dumb when the proud brothers of the child selected for the Infant bring him in on the day of the closing with all his curls, for which he was chosen, clipped, his head shaved to the bone. He accepts in all humility the description of himself at Mass and after school, given by a young miss to her mother,"God comes in dressed like a woman, and goes out like a man." For only by exercising all these virtues and restraining his laughter can a missionary gladden the hosts of heaven with the lambs that are gathered in a vacation school.

In spite of the above, one of the few negative comments I heard about the Padre's vacation school was a complaint by a man who hated as a boy having to travel so far every day and then spend the time stringing beads and working on coloring books and other like projects. No doubt he would rather have gone fishing.

The local paper had a notice that besides religious instruction there would be Bible study, lessons in singing, drawing and other subjects. There would be no charge and non-Catholics would be welcome. The

Padre was fortunate to have his "connections" with his sister May with the Holy Family sisters, and brother George with the Jesuits. Both congregations provided help for these vacation schools.

In an earlier column he described in more detail the vacation school in Keeler:

> *August 19, 1934.* Some day, friends, I am going to try to tell you about Keeler, if I can. It isn't much to look at, but it is a city of history, most which I saw, and part of which I was. But now I must write about our destination yesterday, the vacation school the Padre has been conducting at the church, Saint Ann's, at the south end of town. Riding over he had explained to me the history of the vacation school movement in the United States and how he had seen it work successfully elsewhere before his coming here. Finding that it would be possible to secure the services of his brother Rev. George T. Crowley, S.J., and of another Santa Clara scholastic, the Rev. Louis Kern, S.J., for a few weeks, he opened schools at Lone Pine and Keeler simultaneously. Mr. Kern was quite proficient in Spanish and was placed in charge of the Keeler classes, where 54 children of from 6 to 18 are attending school three hours a day, five days a week. This hardened old sinner was thoroughly surprised. I am not sentimental, or hope I had got over it, but the sight of a half-hundred Mexicans and Spaniards–by race, of course, for most of them were born here–standing barefooted in the burning sand and reciting: "I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States,"made my eyes smart, and not from soda dust. Inside the church I followed the Mass as said by the Padre while the young Jesuit explained the vestments and every move of the priest at the altar. Came time for catechism and for half an hour those youngsters learned and listened. The music period was a severe test of the roof construction. How those dusky children of the desert can sing! Latin, English and Spanish, all languages are alike to them. Recess, with bean-bag, baseball and football, was followed by Bible stories. The last period was given to project-books, a new one to Inyokel, but before it was over I found myself trying to fit a pair of scissors over my gnarled thumb and forefinger. Each child draws, according to models submitted, the catechism story, and occasionally pastes in specially prepared rotogravure pictures. Thus one page of the Communion class project-book has three lines to be printed. "1. Go to Confession." (The child draws a rough confessional and a penitent.) 2. "Be fasting." (An alarm clock with hands pointing to 12.) "3. Give thanks." (A kneeling figure is drawn.) The Angelus, recited in common, ended the morning, leaving me, smothered three deep with children, for the Padre also acted as bus driver, to thank God that I had seen something new under the sun. And the sun that day was about 115 degrees.

The Padre gave the "recipe" for vacation schools in the following column:

> *July 10, 1938.* "Despite Hell and High Water" or "Recipe for Vacation School." First, catch your nuns. Vacation schools have been concocted without nuns, but they are apt to be tasteless, and may collapse before you get them out of the oven. Seminarians are good, volunteer workers will do for lack of other ingredients, but sisters, especially those who devote their lives to public school children, impart a bouquet to the gallimaufry that will make the pedagogic gourmet cluck with satisfaction. Two nuns will suffice, provided your family is small. Others may be added in proportion.
>
> Next prepare your oven. If you have only a church, use that. But if you have a hall, as we have in Lone Pine, your batter won't overflow. Even a garage, the cracks in the siding garnished with sheet tin medallions, may be used as in Bishop. Of course, there is always the vacant lot, the blue sky, and the wind blowing free. There, at any rate you can salute the flag and the cross–but I am getting ahead of the recipe.
>
> Select your children. Not too ripe, nor too small. The latter will keep slipping out of the dough, the former had better be set aside for other treatment. Individual pot pie, for example, or an evening snack. Gather such fruit as has been exposed to the sun of Catholicism, but do not reject any others that may fall into your basket. One never knows what marvelous results can be obtained at times from unlikely looking material. And do not allow distance from your kitchen to the orchard to deter you. If you know of choice specimens more than 20 miles away (the longest practical distance), why cook up another vacation school.
>
> Of course, there is transportation. If the night before you begin your baking you know of 60 children scattered over 1,000 square miles, say around Lone Pine and of 50 others spread over a like area about Bishop, and you know of no certain method of bringing any of them in unless they walk, do not scream. Simply get down and pray. When you get up, get down and pray again.
>
> The next morning borrow the pastor's car and start out–oh, anywhere, and scoop up 15 or 16 specimens and deliver them. Then go out for more. By noon you will realize that you were mistaken about the 60. There are more than 100. So you commandeer the pastor's chariot for an every-day jaunt of 40 miles and put new life and movement into an old jalopy that Ray has allowed to graze in the backyard since last winter. That, plus Brother James (the candle luminary he calls himself now), will wheedle another half dozen, say from the lake shore.
>
> And in the afternoon you will set forth on the great adventure, to find a school bus. Twenty-four miles away you ask about the vehicle you borrowed last year and find that, save for the absence of a carburetor, two tires, a 1938 license, and a Board of Equalization permit, it is ready to run. So are you. So

up and away to the nearest competitor. There a little explanation brings a favorable answer, until the owner remembers that he had an accident at the close of public school and the bus is in the garage for repairs that will take a month. You smile and retire, trying to recall how that short prayer to the Little Flower runs, "In this hour show thy power."

There is another bus 70 miles up at Big Pine. And it is possible that the lady who lost the new contract has not sold hers yet. She lives five miles south, up the canyon. You find her, discover her to be an excellent woman whose daughter wants to be instructed, and you drive home with the knowledge that Ray, by getting up at 5, can be driven to Olancha by Brother in time to secure the bus, steer it around the south end of Owens Lake and present 35 more hopefuls to the sister next morning.

High water enters the picture when you find that the melting snows have carried out the bridge approaches on the Owenyo road. You try from another angle and, much shaken, arrive at the railroad junction in a cloud of adobe dust. Eight more youngsters there, so you essay another route on your return, deciding finally that Ray can gather both the Keeler and Owenyo quota in one long hot two-hour run every morning and yet be home by dark. So your troubles on that score are over. Of course, there is still Bishop, but that can be taken care of tomorrow.

It is wise after you have caught your nuns that you should keep them. For if, as sadly enough did occur, the brother of one of them dies on the very day you have driven them over from Fresno in one sleepless 14-hour round trip you receive a phone call from the mother general that the bereaved nun must be in Fresno again the following morning, it may involve a lot of other complications.

Such as starting out at midnight for Bakersfield–still sans sleep, with the nuns and the Padre, and at Mojave glimpsing the yellow scales of an S.P. train climbing the grade to Tehachapi. A dash into the station to ask the operator to wire ahead that you have two passengers, a wild race up the mountain side to pass the train, and the ensconcing of the nuns in the smoking car at 2 a.m. at Tehachapi. Then a retracing to Mojave and on to Los Angeles so the Padre could preach at Father Louis Kern's first Mass, still sans sleep.

Home again by midnight, to find that Sister Scholastica, also sans sleep, had been picked up at Mojave on her return trip with Sister Siena by Dr. Frank Derrick and was ready to open the school on schedule. Also that Father Meissen, C.SS.R., had faithfully read to both the Bishop and the Lone Pine congregations the notes the Padre had written partly for each.

With the result, or so 'tis said, that the notice to Altar Society members in Lone Pine that the expense of the vacation school could well be taken care of if the members would pay up their dues, and that the secretary would meet them at the door after Mass, so surprised the president of the

Bishop Altar Society, who knew nothing of it, that she fainted dead away. So that when the congregation filed out they found Zoe Farman, the secretary, instead of the basket, holding Alma Keleher's head in her lap.

But accidents will happen, even in the best of kitchens. I contend that if you will follow the above directions carefully, using what material you have at hand, and mixing in plenty of prayer, you will have a vacation school. Despite hell and high water.

The Jesuit, Louis Kern, figures in the next story after some of his Jesuit seminarian friends had accompanied him and George Crowley through Yosemite and remarked what an easy life they would have at the vacation school. Louis Kern and George Crowley were still seminarians at the time:

July 18, 1937. The Padre repeated the remark to the young men when they reported here a week afterwards. "Boy," was Louis Kern's answer, "I wish one of those ducks would drive that school bus full of little Mexicans around that lake four times a day with the mercury at 110. They might have a different notion of how we spend our time." He spoke truly, for there are far more pleasant paths than that across the sand dunes to Keeler, particularly when the wind is carrying its burden of thousand-toothed particles of granite horizontally across the waste. Then, at the Lone Pine end of the line, to take a class in religion and to aid with handicraft, gulp a glass of water, and start back at high noon with a load of high-powered humanity for Owenyo, eight miles north–return for the Keeler load and crawl home for lunch at half past one with every object you touch so hot that you begin to doubt your senses–that may not be heroic, but it is not what most men would choose for a vacation. True, the mountains and the pines are within a half-hour's ride, but in the afternoon there are papers to correct, absentees to call upon, some studying for one's own exams to be done. So the mountains' lure is all the more maddening when you know that you cannot respond, at least to your heart's content, and a brief afternoon in a fortnight is small consolation to one just freed from and doomed to return shortly to the weary grind of books and mass discipline. So my sympathies are still with Louis and his companion-in-arms, George. Teaching vacation schools in Inyo is no joyous junket.

Frank Derrick, our dentist, drives 84 miles a day in the school session to Kearsarge and back, but he delivers his 12 protégés safely every morn and noon. Kearsarge is the name of the station on the narrow gauge where a train passes twice a week and where Mr. and Mrs. Graziani have raised eight (or is it nine?) Italo-Americans as only good Italians can raise children. These and half a dozen others from Independence, six miles nearer, the dentist hauls to class and home again. To date, he has ruined but two tires on the rocky road to Kearsarge. Such is Catholic Action in Inyo.

There is Mrs. Tibbals in Bishop who gathers up eight youngsters of every nationality from American Indian to Basque sheepmen's sons and transports them with her own lively twain to the northern vacation schools (we have two). And, while her fares are learning the intricacies of blessing themselves and sundry facts about the one, holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church, Mrs.Tibbals darns Hubby Tibbals' socks in her car or patches the boys' overalls in those areas where boys' overalls need reinforcing. Her only regret is that she cannot do her washing while she waits.

No one can tell what fun the Padre had in hauling a gas stove and water heater from Lone Pine and setting them up in the rented house for the sisters in Bishop the day before they arrived, nor the joy the ladies of the Altar Society there found in dragging tables and chairs from the undertaker's, dishes from their kitchens, lamps from their living rooms, and food from everywhere to make the nuns feel at home upon their arrival. In Lone Pine, a similar group had dinner prepared, not only for their own teachers, but for those going on to work in Bishop upon their advent. Vacation schools are possible anywhere that Catholic men and women thus put their shoulders to the wheel.

But non-Catholics also share in the blessings that come upon individuals and the communities where 92 and 32 respectively, little ones are taught the eternal truths daily for a month. For there is Doug Joseph of Bishop, an Israelite, who gave a $10 grocery order, and Mr. Hughes of the ice plant, who gave not only ice but a refrigerator. May they and their ilk be remembered in the annals of the good.

Of course, there are discouragements. Louis is wondering whether there was something wrong with the way he told the story of the ten lepers. Several of the class wrote that Christ had "knocked the spots off one of the leopards."

The Padre had a reprimand for the parents who did not make the effort to have their children attend the vacation school and pointed out the benefits in an area which lacked a Catholic school for miles around:

June 4, 1939. I see by the papers that the Padre is again bringing in four of the Holy Family Sisters to teach religious vacation schools at Bishop and Lone Pine. These women, he tells me, end their classes in San Francisco when the public schools close there–their work is exclusively with public school children–and then set out for Inyo and other nooks and crannies of California and Nevada to glean the little ones who have had no opportunities for thorough religious training in the year. Four weeks is a pretty thin slice of religion to sandwich between two 24-week pieces of the bread of schooling without God, work-a-day bread where thoughts about things eternal are as frequent as caraway seeds."Not much," says the Padre, "and yet there are parents who will not make the effort to furnish their spiritually-

starved offspring with even this sop. They cry out,'What can we do to save the world in this mad hour?' If they send their children to vacation school the little ones will bring home the answer. 'Know, love, and serve God here below, and you will be happy with Him forever in heaven. Love God with your whole mind, your whole strength, and all your heart, and your neighbor as yourself.' Surely these parents cannot be afraid to hear the answer."

The Padre gave credit to the non-Catholics who helped the sisters find homes and other necessities:

July 19, 1936. The two nuns who live in the vestry and kitchen of the Episcopalian church in Bishop and teach catechism in the chapel itself, with other classes in the Catholic church across the way, must have much meat for meditation. Because of the shortage of suitable houses there, and through the kindness of the minister, the Padre secured the use of the church and living quarters in vacation school. Occupancy of a church built for another denomination is not unknown in modern Church history, particularly in the case of the English Cathedrals, but in this instance the shoe is on the other foot. The occupation, however, is entirely peaceful, and in itself a remarkable exhibition of good will. To seal the bargain Mrs. Butler, who takes care of the Episcopalian altar, vestments, etc., brings the sisters a quart of milk from her cows every morning.

And in another note:

June 23, 1935. Again I must regard an act of kindness unprecedented in Inyo. Unprecedented because these are our first nuns. Ben Williams and his wife, who live next to the Catholic church in Bishop, are good Protestants of some sect or other. If of no sect, they are good folk, anyway. Ben takes care of boats at Twin Lakes in the summer, his wife joining him there in the tourist season. In the winter he keeps an eye on the church property or such. Now, relates the Padre, Ben and Mrs. Williams have turned over their home to the nuns for their use in their Bishop stay, with all the furnishings necessary to make them comfortable. Surely such generosity must bring its reward, and go far to cement the bonds of true Christian charity in our valley. Hip, hip for the Williams!

Bishop Phillip Scher gladdened the Padre's heart in a magnanimous letter congratulating him on his summer vacation school program:

"I am sending you this little line to express my personal appreciation of the fine work you are doing in the matter of Summer School. Your efforts do not go unnoticed and I thank God that He gives me some priests who have an understanding heart and are generously willing to aide me in the

development of plans which in time will strengthen the position of the Church in this Diocese and cause the salvation of many souls.

"So, while sincerely grateful to you for a response to my call entirely spontaneous, I pray also that God bless your every effort and that this blessing increase abundantly with every soul either saved or otherwise brought close to Him. Only in this consciousness can we priests seek and find our true happiness and look forward to a reward exceedingly great.

"Despite my many duties I shall continue to observe your progress and to rejoice with you as you go on gathering in the golden harvest."[64]

Getting the children ready for the parish's first Confirmation in 10 years was a chore that involved everyone. The ceremony had to be held outdoors since the crowd was so great. The Padre remembered the day and the youngsters' encounters with the Bishop:

> *November 11, 1934.* When I heard some of the youngsters fearlessly replying to the Bishop's questions I trembled lest he should turn on the *padrinos* and *madrinas*, as we call sponsors in the *Pueblo de las Uvas*. For while I was proud to have an *hijado* in the class it is quite a piece since I wet my thumb to turn the page of a catechism. Oddly enough, the five of whom His Excellency called upon came from the four towns in the valley having representatives in the group. Richard Senteno from Keeler and Dolores Kline of Independence met every thrust of the Bishop, while Ben Collins of Bishop and Elisa Brichaga and Cecilia (Dinky) Duarte of Lone Pine proved worthy champions of their communities.
>
> Racing up and down the valley for three and four catechism classes a day was not all drudgery, the Padre says. There were high spots. Thus the other night at Lone Pine he asked the class to close the catechism and tell him the story of Creation and Redemption down to that very moment. When the tale lagged he spurred the pupils on with questions. When the devil was mentioned, Father asked, "Who is that? How did he get into the picture?" When he was told that the gentleman in question had been an angel in good standing he objected, "I've never seen an angel." This led to further elucidation. After thus playing the part of the ignoramus for a few minutes he interjected, "You see, I am awfully dumb." It was Dinky Duarte's chance. "You're telling me," she exploded. Class was then dismissed.

This same Dinky Duarte had a chronic heart disease with frequent fainting spells and in constant peril of an early death. The Padre spoke to her of heaven: "When you die, you'll be Saint Cecilia!" Dinky, ever quick with an answer, immediately replied: "No, I'll be Saint Dinky!"

Although not fluent in Spanish, the Padre knew how to relate to the Mexican culture and always respected the wishes of his Mexican-Ameri-

can parishioners. At times he had to bend the rules, which he did without scruple. The following story demonstrates his flexibility and unfailing courtesy:

> *December 8, 1935.* He has learned a lot in his years of association with them, he continued, and perhaps the most valuable acquisition of all is the ability never to betray surprise, never to smile at any request, outlandish though it may sound. Last week, Mrs. Cecilia Vargas died a few moments after giving birth to twins. Her travail had not been expected for a couple of months, and the Padre had left town some hours previously. Dr. Harvard baptized the little boy and girl, the former dying an hour or so after the mother. But the bereaved Jose Vargas was not satisfied with this arrangement at all, since neither the Padre nor the *padrinos* had assisted at the Baptism. So I watched our pastor, after he had recited the Rosary beside the mother's body laid out in the N.S.P. dance hall, reach inside the same coffin for the little stiff form, place it in the hand of the would-be godparents, and read the prayers for the burial of an infant. Thus all were satisfied. Nor did he betray the least astonishment the next morning when Mr. Vargas told him, just as he was about to begin his sermon, that the mother had died so suddenly that she had not had time to bless her other little lads, five and seven years of age. Would the Padre give them their mother's blessing? The Padre would, and the boys knelt at the altar rail with the father for this vicarious benediction; nor would Jose rise from his knees until the lads had kissed the priest's hand. Well, we didn't smile much at that odd ceremony, nor when the dominie used it to remind us of how suddenly this young woman had been called, and of how she had gone to her judgment with her little baby in her arms to plead for her.
>
> He recalled then his first experience with a Mexican wedding, some 16 years past. First he had accompanied the suitor to the house of his beloved, there to beg the apparently astonished father to allow this good and worthy man to wed the fair young maiden. All the prepared objections having been carefully answered, the ceremony was arranged for the next morning. *Musica?* Sure, they could have *musica* if they furnished it. Which explained the presence at the Mass of the fiddlers three and the big bass viol in the middle aisle. (No extra charge for rhyme.) But the young priest prayed for light when the attendants handed him a few yards of wide white ribbon. In an inspired gesture he wrapped it about the persons of the newly-weds, and their smiles told him he had made no faux pas. So pleased was he with his success that he determined to treat the Spanish-speaking congregation to a sample of his proficiency in that tongue. He beckoned to a lad in the front seat and asked him to go into the bedroom-sacristy and bring out the blue card he would find in the suitcase. It had the prayers after Mass printed in Spanish. "Blue, remember, blue." After a few minutes of suspense in

which any errant eyes were all finally focused on the sanctuary doorway, the boy reappeared carrying in solemn fashion, suspended by its twin strings, the missionary's blue collar bag. The climax came a little later, however, when the priest asked for the marriage license and was informed that it was at the county seat. "Why?" "Well, they kept it there to record it. You see, we were married there yesterday by the judge"...

Another faculty he has garnered from the years is a calm disbelief in the average Mexican's punctuality, as we understand the word. For there is a certain punctuality about the lives of these people, once you become an expert in their system of reckoning time, and by the use of the logarithms of experience and familiarity with the human equation, make the proper deductions or additions from or to standard time. Hence if you want a Mexican to bring his baby for Baptism at 3:30 you set the hour at 2. If you really want him there at 2 you add, *En punto, tiempo Americano.* He will grin understandingly and come at 2:30.

He shared the grief of a family in an unusual tragedy:

December 1, 1935. The sun had dropped behind the Funerals, suddenly hemming the desert with a violet border, as the Padre recited: "Suffer the little ones to come unto Me, for of such is the kingdom of heaven." The handful of adobe clattered loudly, falling on the little pine coffin, so still was the group, so silent the waste that stretched away from the rough mounds into infinity. It was Señora Gutierrez herself who then thrice spattered earth upon the casket of her boy, three times in the form of that symbol in which alone she now found peace. And it was Juan, the father of little Frankie, who aided the compadres in lowering the body and covering it with the embracing soil. At the last, it was the dry-eyed mother again who fashioned a rude cross upon the hillock with the small rocks the diggers had thoughtfully laid aside. *Que Dios te lo pague*, she murmured to the priest as he prepared for the 130-mile return to Lone Pine, "May God repay you!"

Juan was not at home in the section house the night his babies burned to death. He had gone to Los Angeles to bury the brother of his Francisco's godfather, and, if you understand the good Mexican way of reckoning kinship, Juan did right to assist at the funeral. But if he had been at home in Death Valley Junction he could have cut that long piece of railroad tie into the proper length for the stove and would not have left it sticking out to burn up and spill over on the floor after his wife and six youngsters had fallen asleep. Too, if he had been there, he could have helped his frantic spouse and eight-year old Carmen save not only Mercedes and Rosendo, but perhaps he would also have found little Frankie standing there petrified with fear by the door before the fiery tentacles, lashed by a 40-mile gale, had clasped him so tightly that he died within the week. Who knows

but that Juan might have been able to find his babies, 10-month Arnulfo and 2-year Refugio, in that hell before the crashing roof turned them into two lumps of charcoal that we buried in one little box. Ah, only God knows what might have happened, just as He alone knows the why of the holocaust!

They laid the coffin, fashioned over at the railroad shop that morning, on a table in Jesus Saladon's front room. Jesus had taken the Gutierrez family into his home since the fire, and from his window they can look into the ashes of their home. Lupe tacked a white lining around the interior of the box; four drawer-pulls served as handles. The Padre set a wreath of paper roses at the foot. Then Lupe and Clara Robles, who had taught vacation school this summer, began: "Angel of God, my guardian dear." When they came to the end of the verse of *O Maria, Madre mia*, all the Mexicans kneeling along the wall joined in the chorus. It was then that the Padre told why he was not wearing a black stole, for black is the hue of sin and sorrow, but here we were celebrating the birth of angels. He reminded us how Christ had said that unless we became as little children we would not enter the kingdom of heaven, and asked us so to live that we might be as little Francisco when we came to die. He said too that he had stood by many deathbeds and many open graves, but that he had yet to meet in the face of such disaster as this a faith as childlike and convincing as that shown by these parents. "Pardon these tears, Padre," they had sobbed, "they are not tears of resentment, but the natural sorrow of separation. This is God's way. He gave us these little ones; to Him we gladly give them back. If he wants Francisco too (this was while the lad lay dying in the hospital) He can have him. God's will be done." I wasn't ashamed of my sinus trouble after that, for I noticed even the Protestant doctor and a few other dignified folk looking out the window and sniffling a bit.

It was Dr. Shrum, by the way, who made an entry on Frankie's chart at the hospital which, I think, is unique, and may find its way into the stories of vacation schools somewhere, at least in heaven. Among such notations as "Very restless," "Temperature 106 degrees," I read, and the Padre quoted in his talk, "1a.m. Sat up in bed and recited the Lord's Prayer in perfect English, made the Sign of the Cross, and dropped back on the pillow." It was Clara's turn to weep when she heard: "Frankie has done God's will and has gone to his Father in heaven. Only thus can you and I, learning from him, come at last to Our Father's house." She had taught Frankie the Our Father.

The section house had been a two-family affair, and Clara and her father, occupants of the other half, had escaped with nothing more than their lives. Their earthly possessions, including some twenty dollars that the girl had saved from her wages in the hotel laundry, became fuel for the flames. But the railroad company has solved the housing problem handsomely, and, before the blackened heap that was her home, Clara now dwells in an abandoned boxcar, shunted there by the company for the exclusive use of her-

self and her dad. Knowing her as I do, I can see her on her knees on Thanksgiving day, thanking God for the boxcar. But Inyokel, soft-hearted old slob, wonders if there are not some who will read this corner and want to help Clara fit up her breakfast nook and her all-electric kitchen, or to send a Shetland pony or an Austin to keep the feet of the remaining Gutierrez children off the ground this Christmas. Forgive me for poking fun. I am incurable, but if the heart of you responds to this tale from the farthest corner of the diocese, write to the Padre or to Father Dowling of the Catholic Charities in Fresno. I haven't asked them about it, but they'll understand.

The Padre reached out to non-Catholics in a series of classes with topics of interest to them, inviting the attendees to submit questions one week which would be answered the next. Topics included titles as: "Can Protestants be saved?"; "Why a Pope?"; "Why get married?"; "Why tell your sins to a man?"; and "the folly of the cross." He continued this outreach in a non-threatening way by articles in the local press on the meaning of Lent, Holy Week, Easter and the Christmas season. He was asked to give the baccalaureate address in 1935 at the Lone Pine High School. After telling the story of a hitch-hiker to whom he offered a ride and thought he might be able to be a preacher, he proceeded with the following address to the students:

"But what has this to do with graduation? I will answer by asking you the meaning of education. Again I go to the Latin original, educare, to draw out. Hence the mere imparting or acquisition of tables and dates, declensions, sonnets, equations and cosines is not education. That is information. Education is the development of the native powers or talents of the pupil, and the directing of those talents into channels that will enable the possessor to live more fully. Thus true education develops all our faculties, not only of the intellect, but also of the will. It will not only make us more fit to live in society, it will make us more tolerant, more kindly, more aware of the lessons of history. It will attune us to the thoughts of the great minds of all time. But it cannot be complete unless it goes back to God, unless it teaches obedience to Him, His laws and His representatives, whether they be in the home, the school, the Church or the nation.

"Society has given you of its best, you are now in turn bound to render unto the less privileged of society the benefits of your education. You are the leaders of tomorrow, to you we fling the torch. But leaders must first learn to be followers. 'He that would be master among you, let him first learn to be a servant.'"[65] Thus, he became an instructor for young people of all faiths and an inspiration to all, regardless of faith.

He often acknowledged publicly his debt to his many non-Catholic friends who financially helped his poorer parishes:

> *December 11, 1934.* I peeked in on the bridge party given by the Catholic women at Bishop the week before Thanksgiving. Turkeys were the prizes, donated by Mrs. Phillips and Carl Nellen. Carl couldn't remember just where he procured his bird. He said the moon wasn't shining. But they were grand specimens, and I wished that I had known as much about this modern gambling as I do about poker. Then I would not have had to express my gratitude on the national holiday through the medium of wieners. Everybody seemed to be happy, and the committee did a splendid job, as far as this old hermit could see. But I couldn't help thinking that we would have a hard time keeping a padre alive in these parts if it wasn't for the shekels we receive from our non-Catholic neighbors. There were 80 people at that whingding; I have never seen more than 12 of them at Mass. Of the women passing the coffee only two started life as Catholics; three are married to Protestants. Of course, there were several at the tables who had made their First Communion or had served Mass in their boyhood, but I needed not the square and compass in their lapels to tell me that they no longer blessed themselves. Yet, card party or supper or play, it is upon these that we must depend for the support of the church in Inyo, for the handful of practicing Catholics, brave and generous as I know them to be, could not keep a priest in gasoline. And lest anybody think "keeping a priest in gas" is an Irish bull, I am authorized to quote the reverend himself as saying that "the best spirit he has found for preserving the faith in Inyo is gasoline." With an average of one practical Catholic to every hundred square miles of the parish, the pretty-colored liquid in the service station obelisks is the tie that binds. Cars cost more than clergy out where the waste begins. Oh yes, the committee was composed of Mesdames Byrne, Dean and Kellcher with the ladies Cole, Collins, Morrison, and Nellen in the offing.

And he never failed to express public appreciation to his parishioners who lent a hand in his priestly work. Along with some play-by-play descriptions of what actually went on in the first communion classes, he wrote:

> *August 26, 1934.* Father, have you some straight pins?" "When do you want this incense thing?" "Have you another mason jar for the flowers, Father?" "I drank water, Father, but only a little. Can I go to Communion?" "Silvano hit me last night so I want to go to Confession again." "When do we sing *O Virgen Pura*?" I couldn't do much to help the Padre, save move a pew or lift a table for the women preparing breakfast in the hall at the rear. So I merely knelt and listened and fanned myself with a hymn card. It was the feast of the Assumption and First Communion morning in Keeler.

At last all the questions were answered, the last wreath of myrtle and sweet peas which I had helped him gather in Lone Pine the night before patted in place, and Tony, who is *poco loco*, divorced from the bell rope, on which he had swung for ten minutes. We were only half an hour late as the Padre took a final look at the blessed 15 in the vestibule before he proceeded to vest. Then came Dolores Jobyn, his faithful organist. "Father, one of the pedals on the organ has just fallen off."

It was not until the middle of Benediction that the organ repair proved to be temporary, but by then we had gained enough momentum to roll on despite squeak and wheeze. Reverently and faultlessly the youngsters had proceeded, two by two to the footpace to receive their Savior for the first time. The Padre explained to me afterwards that the two lads who had gyrated like waltzing mice inside the rail were the two who had missed rehearsal the preceding afternoon. One had been taken to Lone Pine to get his *pantalones*–the pair ordered from Sears Roebuck had not arrived–and the other little fellow had also been transported to that town, 16 miles away, for a haircut. Haircuts are 50 cents in Keeler; those who shop can secure one in Lone Pine for two-bits.

Scapulars bestowed and pictures snapped, and the communicants safely seated at breakfast, we dashed off to Lone Pine for the Padre's second Mass. "Thank God it's over, Inyokel. But it was a lot of fun. Just when you would be ready to fly into as many pieces as a jig-saw puzzle, one of those pupils would pull a boner that sent a ripple through your anatomy. A girl asked me to buy a prayer book for her, and not to forget the 'groceries.' She meant 'Rosaries.' Reciting the Commandments we got the old error, of course, that 'Thou shalt not 'cover' thy neighbor's wife,' but 'Thou shalt not blow false whistles against thy neighbor' was new to me. 'Adam and knees' were the first man and woman, and the Ave Maria began,'Hail Mary, full of grapes.' A mother assured me that her son told her there were 'three purses in God.'"

I heard somewhere that the missionaries to the Eskimos have a difficult time in persuading those cold storage folk that hell is an undesirable place, at least from the climatic point of view. I recalled this when the Padre informed me that many of his pupils did not know the word for "garden," and hence described the primal abode of our first parents as a place where there were lots of trees and flowers. Compared to the Natural Soda Products, or "N.S.P." or *la Soda*, as the settlement housing most of these children is known. For there may be found 30 or 40 tamarisks, or "African cedars," slouchy and unkempt desert habitués, yet furnishing feathery, emerald oases in the parched, gray landscape. N.S.P. has three tamarisks. He who would seek other herbage there must avail himself of the Aladdin's lamp of the wastelands–the can opener. And the tons of tins strewn along the desert attest that others too have thus sought verdure and vitamins. Candid indeed is life in Inyo!

Three sisters, the Rodriguez girls, who had taught catechism in vacation schools in the South, walked from N.S.P. to Keeler and returned each day to teach their little neighbors. As soon as the Lone Pine school ended two Brichaga sisters, Irene and Lucy, rode over with the Padre to aid him at Keeler. Irene, during the time she was employed in the Chancery office in Fresno, had been active in confraternity work. Ernestine Dornaleche, too, visiting from San Fernando, lent Lone Pine the benefit of her experience teaching in San Fernando. The devotion of these young women, 'mid heat and sand and discomfort, cannot pass unnoticed by Him who writes among the stars.

Nor can we forget Elisa Brichaga, baby of that clan, who played the organ for the Lone Pine vacation school previous to her departure for a nursing course in Bakersfield Junior College and Mercy Hospital last week. The Padre chuckled when he told me how Elisa had walked out of Sunday school on him when she was about five years old, going home to tell her mother that "she would never go back to church while that priest was there." "She was better than a lot of the others at that," commented the Padre. "Elisa said she wouldn't come back and she did. How many are there that promise never to miss Mass again–and never come back."

In a later column Inyokel had to apologize for misspelling Dolores Jobyn and corrected it to Jobin. His columns were well scrutinized and any error was caught by his observant readers.

Three little stories about the Bonham children show that he got inspiration for his columns by any small incident:

January 5, 1936. A moment I like to live over is little Billy Bonham's experience at Mass the Sunday before Christmas. It seems that Billy, who is six or so, was the only man at church in Lone Pine one morning and his mother told him to take up the collection. So well did he accomplish the feat, despite a little difficulty in lifting the basket from one pew to the other, that he has been our regular collector ever since. But, on this certain Sunday, a good non-Catholic gentleman drove one of our women to Mass, and then decided to participate in the service himself. A little late, he and his friend had to take a front pew. Billy, doing his usual chore, came to their seat last. The Catholic dropped in a dollar bill. The Protestant did the same. Whereupon Billy immediately fell right over backwards in the aisle, spilling his gleanings far and wide. Oddly enough, in the scramble that ensued, the rest of us picked up and replaced the dollar bills, leaving the two generous donors to retrieve our nickels and dimes. The Padre contends that the incident furnishes another good argument for the use of envelopes. Shock absorbers, as it were."

March 8, 1936. A smile, too, for little Betty Bonham, coming up to the altar rail for ashes on Ash Wednesday. How was she to guess that the priest put

ashes on one's forehead? She had seen folks going to Communion, so she stood on the step and held her mouth wide open.

April 16, 1939. Somebody left the piano cover up and the sacristy door open Holy Thursday. Result: The cat played a "Here Comes Malicious" finish on the keyboard just as we put aside the curtain to proceed to the altar. It took two minutes to get the servers sobered up. Tip seemed to realize that the bell was due for a rest when he accompanied it with his best howl all through the Gloria Thursday. Every Sunday he lifts his nose towards the bell as Ray enters the belfry, prepared to howl on the down-stroke. Billy Bonham's Spot nonplussed George Holy Saturday by standing in the line of march as the procession started from the vestibule. George had found no mention of dogs in the multitudinous rubrics. "Don't bother with the dog," I muttered, and we routed the lectern, triple candle, incense and other traffic around him. Better a half-dozen dogs with small boy at Mass than no small boys.

Christmas was a busy time for the Padre as he reviewed a hectic few weeks:

January 2, 1938. I was minded to call this "All on a Christmas Morn," but, because I would have to insert so many flashes of previous preparations, I must be content to name it "Yule in Inyo," or "How They Spread the Good Tidings in Eastern California." Ten days ago it began at Death Valley Junction, eight miles from the Nevada boundary, the closest mission station to Las Vegas and Boulder Dam. There the Padre left his Mass kit with Jim O'Connell and told him to keep it right side up, lest the wine should spill, until Father Watson of Loyola showed up on Christmas eve. Then he asked Mrs. Gower, staunch Methodist wife of the Borax Company manager, to play a few Christmas hymns on the piano and to sing to her own accompaniment at the Midnight Mass in Corkill Hall. Some words of advertising of the *Misa de Gallo* among the Mexican colony and we were away to Furnace Creek Inn.

"Yes," Miss Ronan assured us, she "would gladly reserve a room for Father Watson at the Inn and publish the hours of the two Masses he would celebrate in the lounge on Christmas morn." Clyde Erskine would also post a notice in the ranch lobby and Manager Bennett would do us a like favor at Stovepipe Wells. Lieutenant Davis set down in his "memory book" the item, "Truck to be furnished Catholic CCC boys in camp on Christmas morning for journey to Mass at the Inn." On we sped, the Padre remarking that not all inns are alike, as, for instance, that one in Bethlehem which had hung out the "No Vacancy" sign some years back.

Monday and word to Ralph Feil to put in a meter and turn on the lights at Keeler church so that Luisa Perez might practice on the organ nights

after school and have some carols ready. Tuesday and a hint to the oil company to be sure we had enough fuel on hand for Midnight Mass at Lone Pine. A journey into Panamint Valley after desert holly, fruitless because all the bushes there were too dry to make good wreaths. But an interesting jaunt withal because we succeeded in miring down the car at a 45-degree angle in the volcanic ash on the brink of thousand-foot deep Rainbow Canyon. I had to climb up to the door on the uphill side in order to get out, and was promptly thrown back to the down-hill side by a 50-mile gale. A prayer or two, however, a little scooping, a little pushing, and a little wheel-work taught by years of desert travel and we were on our way–to be mired down a half-hour later in the adobe of Panamint Sink. More digging, a little greasewood and sage under the tires, and off again across the playa. A big limousine was parked on the highway not far from where we returned to the oiled surface, and there was no mistaking the distress of the two women standing beside it. The feet of their male companion protruded from under the rear axle. "Trouble?" "Yes, how far is it to the nearest service station?" "Fifteen miles ahead, three miles back." I told them. "Is it a tire?" "Yes, and my husband has never changed one before." So out piled the Padre and I to handle the luxurious tools of a La Salle and feel the thrill of fondling a brand new tire that knew neither blowout patches nor boots. "Can't I pay you something?" asked our desert acquaintance after we had put away the jack. "You have saved my life." "No, not a thing," cut in the Padre, heading me off. "You see, I am the Catholic priest around here and no desert man has ever refused to help me, nor I him." "You're the what? Did you say the priest?" I grinned. "Well," confessed the amateur tire repairer, "I am not a Catholic, but I certainly think a whole lot more of the Church now. Here's my card, and I shall try to send some little thing to your church for Christmas." I glanced at the card as the Padre held it during his goodbyes, and drew in my breath. The man who had been lying on the floor of Panamint Valley was the head of the real estate trust of one of the great banks of California! Well, we didn't get any holly that day, although I reminded the Padre that we might have made some hay. We picked the holly Wednesday morning along the prehistoric beach of Owens Lake, a hundred feet above the present puddle, where the multi-colored shingle lies today as flat and hard as when the receding waves ran noisily away from it forever in a far day.

Wednesday noon we packed candy boxes at the Lions' Club luncheon for the community Christmas tree, and that night we passed out toys and apples till our arms ached, while the minister led the carols and the dentist and the doctor and the auto dealer held the advancing hordes at bay. There was rock-paper to be made that afternoon for the cribs at Keeler, Lone Pine, and Bishop, and on Thursday we drove the 20 leagues to the last-named city to set up the manger. Twice the Padre handed me back figures, one a camel, the other a Negro, before he could convince me that they were part

of the Wise Men's party and must be kept low until Jan. 6. I did better at Lone Pine on Friday evening, only mistaking Joseph for a shepherd. And at ten that night in Keeler I was letter perfect, and we transformed the wood-box into a convincing cave in half the time it took us to find the homes destined for the Christmas baskets we had aboard. But we were back in good season for Confessions at Lone Pine, and when I heard Clark O'Connell playing the *Adeste Fideles* on his trumpet from the belfry at midnight I forgot, and forgave, much.

Of course, it was not so pleasant accompanying the pastor when he rose at five and drove off in the dark for the second Mass at Bishop, with the thermometer at 20 and every living soul asleep but ourselves. There were compensations, as when the sun rendered an accolade to the ermined White Mountains on our right in a sudden gesture, and then the Sierra came to meet us in a gown of clinging rose. But on the other hand the oil had run out at Bishop and an icy pool in the sacristy grew rapidly from the frozen and broken pipes. But we forget that, too, by the time we had retraced the 60 miles and had driven 16 more to Keeler for the third, or 11:30 Mass. For the example of the young people fasting until noon for their Christmas tryst with their Lord made me oblivious to my own loose belt. I even overlooked the paper poinsettias on the altar–paper flowers are the only flowers that will grow in Keeler–and I thoroughly relished the breakfast Mrs. Perez set up for us afterwards, macaroni soup and fruit-cake. And I am looking forward to that dinner out at the Minnietta mine in Panamint this afternoon with Chris Wicht and Mickey Summers and the boys. That will be another 150 miles before bedtime, but didn't I call this piece "Spreading the Tidings?" After all, Christmas comes but once a year.

And a few weeks later there was a follow-up note on the episode of the rescue of the stranded motorist:

January 21, 1938. Lest you be further perturbed, you who have asked me as we met at a turn-out or who have written to inquire, the Padre HAS heard from the banking gentleman whom he encountered, feet first, in Panamint Valley in the holidays. Wrote the erstwhile tire-changer: "Late in the afternoon of Dec. 19–a desert road in Death Valley–a flat tire–a real help in the time of need! I shall always remember with appreciation your splendid courtesy and assistance on the above-mentioned occasion. Please accept the enclosed small check for your church, to be used in any way you wish." The "enclosed" was for five dollars, and the Padre has suddenly developed a very deaf ear on the side from which I address him. He has apparently forgotten all about my presence in Panamint that afternoon, and the only consolation I enjoy from the windfall is that he has decided to call off the drive for funds for a new roof on the church. It is an ill tire that blows nobody good.

Five dollars was a substantial sum during the depression years, especially for a poor parish like the Padre's.

The Padre's generous heart was such that he never refused to help a traveler or a sick person in need. The following story tells of one such occasion:

> *November 4, 1934.* I thought it would make the Padre feel happy to know that I had received a letter from a San Francisco reader, who had seen the first and only installment of these elucubrations to appear in the *Monitor*, and had since subscribed to the *Register* in order to follow my meandering pen. It should cheer his sacerdotal self, I was sure, to know that many shut-ins in a hospital of the city by the Golden Gate had made a scrapbook of these scraps from Inyo, and passed it from bed to bed. So as he drew up my condensed milk box Windsor chair to the table I told him. "And I suppose they all have mastoids and nurses named Kennedy," he snapped, so bitterly that I almost choked on a bite of venison. And not another word out of him until the steam of our coffee curled up into the blue tobacco smoke. Then he explained.
>
> It seems that Sunday last he said his first Mass in Bishop as usual every alternate week, and drove the 60 miles to Lone Pine for the second Mass. That over, he busied himself about a score of details attendant on the Bishop's coming for Confirmation on the 28th. In the evening he ran over to Keeler–16 miles farther south, to assist Father Leo Kulleck, C.SS.R., at the opening of the Mexican mission. Still singing with the congregation, *Amparadme y guiadme*, he dragged a would-be pious dog into the vestibule in time to meet a boy who told him there was a long distance call for him at the only phone in town. Bob Richards at Bishop wanted to inform him that a man had collapsed in the hotel lobby, that he was critically ill, and that a letter in his pocket indicated that he was a Catholic. So off on the 76-mile jaunt set the Padre, alone, save for his Lord, for he stopped at Lone Pine to secure the Host.
>
> At 10:30 he was in Bishop, where the doctor informed him that the patient was suffering from a mastoid, and must be rushed to some hospital immediately. He had fainted on the bus, bound from Reno to Bishop, and again in the hotel lobby, just as he had finished writing three letters to a Mr. Kennedy in Salt Lake City, a Miss Kennedy in an eastern city, and a Sister Mary Catherine at the Holy Cross Hospital, Salt Lake City. In his pocket the doctor had found an envelope, addressed "To whom it may concern," containing a note signed by Doctor Delph of Stockton, to the effect that the bearer, Joseph William Kennedy, had been treated at St. Joseph's Hospital there for mastoid trouble. The doctor had punctured the ear-drum, he said, but had not removed the mastoid because the sufferer was on his way to Las Vegas, Nevada, where his sister, Mary Agnes Kennedy, was a

registered nurse, and had arranged for a radical operation to be performed at the hospital there on the morning of Monday, Oct. 22. More, this man was to meet his brother, a truck-driver on the Utah-California transport, at Goldfield at 11 o'clock Sunday night. This brother would drive him to Las Vegas. In case the sufferer should lose consciousness because of the "intense and throbbing pain," the physician went on, a Catholic priest should be called, as the victim had a sister in the convent at Salt Lake and himself had until recently worked at the Mount of the Atonement, Graymoor, New York.

Receiving Dr. Osborne's assurance that the man was truly in grave danger, the Padre heard his Confession, gave him Viaticum and anointed him. Then, since there are no facilities for such an operation nearer than Los Angeles, and because of the arrangements for treatment at Las Vegas in the morning, and because a transient had no claim for county aid, and because in Inyo the priest is the Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, and the Big Brothers, he wrapped Joseph William Kennedy in blankets and started for Goldfield, over the hills and far away.

Over Mount Montgomery, where the snow glistened in the full moon, they sped, the priest trying to make time and yet avoid unnecessary bumps for the patient. Once on an unexpected turn they plowed into the sand, but a half-hour's shovelling by the Padre settled that, the sick man resting quietly in the car. The lights of Goldfield, 146 miles from Bishop, twinkled through the night at 3 o'clock, but of course the brother had long since disappeared. So on to Vegas, the car replenished with gas by a sleepy garage man, the patient, somnolent from a sedative the Bishop doctor had given him to ease his pain, the priest fasting in the hope of saying Mass at the journey's end. Dawn found them skirting the Funeral Range, at the southeast boundary of Death Valley, and at half-past seven the car rolled to a stop in front of the rectory at Las Vegas after its 540-mile trek, or 500 in 24 hours.

The ailing man had informed the Padre that his sister was away on vacation, but would arrive in Las Vegas that morning. She had been spending a few days in Los Angeles, where, incidentally, she had trained as a nurse at St. Vincent's. But, if it could be arranged to have the ear irrigated, he could stand the pain and wait in a hotel till she arrived. So the dominie, after consulting his clerical confrere, took the man to the Las Vegas hospital, where a doctor agreed to treat him. In the meantime our Padre betook himself to the altar, after which he set out on a little tour of investigation. Neither of the hospitals had any record of a Miss Kennedy, and a phone call to Boulder City revealed that she was unknown there. A search for the address found by Bob Richards on the letter the night before ended in the sagebrush. The truck depot knew no Kennedy. So back to the hospital went the good Samaritan, and closeted himself with the doctor. That gentleman, and he was one, had found the patient really possessed of a mastoid, but he had strenuously objected to its removal until his sister should appear. The

ear-drum had been punctured, but it was a very old scar. The Padre then suggested that the medical directory be consulted, and no Dr. Delph could found in the Stockton section. To procure conclusive evidence without much more ado the Padre then asked the physician to have Kennedy write and sign some statement that he authorized the doctor to do what he could to help him regain his health. This would enable them to compare his handwriting with that on the purported letter from "Dr. Delph." In a moment the doctor returned with the document, and the writing and the signature were identical with those in the planted note.

Before the chief of police, who came in response to the call of the Padre, the fakir denied all. When the contradictions in his story were pointed out he doggedly asserted that his sister and brother would show up the next day. The doctor accused him of working this game in order to get money from priests and dope from physicians for the pain, and an inspection of his back revealed a hundred hypo-needle jabs. The priest then told him that they wished to be fair to him, and since all he wished to do was to wait for his relatives, he could do it in the jail, and the chief would leave word at the hotel for the phantom folks. Thus passed into history a ride that to Inyokel should be linked with those of Paul Revere and John Gilpin or the dash to Nome. And if the Padre boils when he sees this "Hegira with a Hophead" I will plead that I violated his confidence only because his experience might warn others who could not, as he did, use the return journey from his neighboring parish, believe it or not, to visit his parishioners in Death Valley. For the southeastern corner of Inyo is four times closer to Boulder Dam than it is to Fresno, the cathedral city.

A month or so later Inyokel had a follow-up on the Padre's Good Samaritan adventure:

December 16, 1934. A nun has written this grizzled old mucker from Salt Lake City to thank him for publishing the account of the Padre's "Hegira with a Hophead." She says that the sisters in the hospital there had been deluged with letters from all over this western country from those who wished to communicate with this religious sister of the mastoid martyr. And of course there were the notes from "Brother" Kennedy himself. The "sister," it is needless to add, does not exist, and the hospital staff hopes that the publicity given this clever fakir in this farrago will curb his further activities. Amen, sister!

From a nurse named Helen Kennedy comes a vigorous protest about the same article. She contends that there are some good Kennedys, not all are deceivers. Have it your way, Miss. But if you should be writing to the Padre you had better use a pseudonym. He just cannot assimilate any more Kennedys for a while.

Bob Richards, too, is wondering who is going to repay him the $2.25 he paid the Interstate Telegraph Company for the telephone call that started his pastor on the thousand-mile tour. Be of good heart, Bob. He that counts the sparrow's fall and misses not the cup of water in His Name will not overlook this item. When next the Padre glares, quote the beatitudes to him. There is a day of reckoning coming, even for hotel clerks.

And then there was Holy Week:

June 12, 1938. It was warm in May this year. Very warm, in fact. Then it cooled off after a week or so, remember? Too, it was just before May began that Brother James came to stay with us. Ray Quirin, the Pennsylvania lad who sleeps in the spare cot and watches the formulas for the lawn and the vines in the Padre's pilgrimages, had been here for months. But when Brother James' superior decided that he might acquire more plumpness if dipped in the sun and solitude of Lone Pine for a turn, rather than languish in a hospital at San Jose, our community was raised to the rank of a major house. One Holy Week ceremonies took on a Cathedral aspect, with two acolytes and everything. Even the *Exsultet*, which accompanied the blessing of the Paschal candle, was unusual. The Padre says this is supposed to be very joyous. He sang it. But it is of the candle itself that I would speak further. And of Brother James and Ray. Possibly, too, of the Padre.

The great candle, which is blessed in all parish churches on Holy Saturday and set upon a special holder by the altar side, represents the risen Christ; its flame, extinguished on Ascension Thursday, reminding us of the presence on earth of the Light of the world for 40 days after His Resurrection. It is usually profusely ornamental and about half-way of its length are five small holes arranged in the shape of a cross. In these, at the blessing, are inserted grains of incense, embedded in wax, symbols both of the Cross of Christ and of His sacred wounds. In small churches, it is permissible to use the same candle year after year, provided it has not burned sufficiently to nullify its usefulness. Our Lone Pine candle was only a year old and straight as Tragan's column on Easter eve in the year of Our Lord, 1938.

The Padre, who has at various and sundry times in the past returned to his churches and found limp, pendulous tongues where once fair products of the bee had lifted stiff salutes to God, and who has gazed ruefully upon a huge cube of stearin that used to be a gross of votive candles, knows all the symptoms. It was he who first saw the signs of dissolution, and after Mass on May morning he brought in the slightly bowed Paschal torch and laid it, arch upward, on the vestment case. "In that way," he explained to Ray, "it will gradually straighten out by its own weight." But he reckoned without the impetuosity of youth, for a day later the helpful lad stood shamefacedly before him and began, "Father, the candle... I thought I might kind

of hurry it a bit and I tried to bend it into shape. And it…" "I know, it broke. And it broke in the middle, where the cross was." "Yes, how did you know?" The priest did not answer, save to express regret that little could be done about it. Of course, it might be melted together, though it was doubtful. But he had forgotten Brother James.

It was the Friday before the third Sunday after Easter when the pastor observed the candle back in position again. About the break a swaddling band of adhesive plaster was wrapped, with the incense grains, of course, missing. Brother explained that Ray and he had skilfully made all again as new. It was the night of the Saturday before the third Sunday after Easter when the Padre asked Ray and Brother to follow him into the church. Like a gourd from a vine hung the inert and spineless candle. The erstwhile repairmen withdrew from the sacred precincts to compose their features, later returned and removed the corpus delicti. The following morning the pastor begged the parishioners not to be shocked at the absence of the candle, mentioned something about the heat and, or so Brother avers, used a simile about cooked macaroni, and opined that all the kings' horses and all the king's men could not put the candle together again.

It may have been the challenge thus offered, it may have been the doggedness of the Irish, but for days thereafter the candle rested in the front pew at the joint formed by the back and the seat. The thought was, apparently, that thus it could be coaxed back into a semblance of rectitude. But the pastor overheard his two assistants later bemoaning the fact that the heat in the church was forcing the wax into a rectangular shape, conforming to the pew, so that experiment likewise ended without notable accomplishment.

What is next related is vigorously denied by Brother James, while Ray only chuckles when it is repeated. The Padre has let it be known that late one evening he heard a voice in the sacristy, and drawing near recognized Brother's pleading tones. "Come on, now. Buck up, you can do it. We have only two weeks to go. You can't let me down like this. Go out there and show them what you're made of. Aw, come on…" He was giving the candle a pep talk.

One subject was carefully avoided in mutual discussions between us after that night. Nobody spoke about Paschal candles. If the rejuvenators had any plans, they were not mentioned. Then came Ascension Thursday. After Mass the Padre sensed the tautness of the attitudes of the two, but he made no comment. It was the following Sunday before Ray found courage to ask, "Well, what did you think of the candle on Ascension Thursday?" "The candle? You mean the Paschal candle?" innocently inquired the pastor. "Sure, didn't you see how we had fixed it up, putting nails in it to splice it, and melting the edges?" "No, I never even looked. Was it there?"

It was little more than a year later that the Padre had another report on Brother James:

July 23, 1939. I enjoyed your scrap-book greatly," writes Mary Duff national organizer for the Legion of Mary, "especially the 'pep talk' Brother James gave the Paschal candle." I am sorry I cannot relay the message to Brother. You see, he died day before yesterday and now, we hope, stands forever in that glory which the candle symbolized, the light of Christ. "You have had your purgatory here," whispered the Padre to the skin-covered skeleton that sat propped up in the hospital bed. "I hope so," came the gasping words "if I don't lose it all at the end." "Pray for Inyo in heaven, Brother, and we shall not forget you." His sunken eyes lit up, he nodded and waved a weak goodbye. Not two days later the flame that had flickered for a decade in the iron candlestick of pain went out, and his brave soul rose, like a puff of smoke, to the Father of Lights.

"James Murphy, died July 13, 1939." Half of his life as a teacher in the Brothers of Mary in Dayton, Honolulu, and Santa Cruz had been that of an invalid. The cost of the training for his task great, his hospital expenses were even more. Dead now in early manhood–what waste! What species of "planned economy" could explain the futility of this poor man's life, the physical handicaps, the prolonged wait in the ante-room of death, the untimely end? Brother had an answer for similar situations, which became a byword with us. It fits here: "Only God knows, and He won't tell."

Stair treads wear out from the lift they give to many thousand feet, and their hollowed forms must be replaced by others. Spark plugs give of their substance to the receiving points until their diminished bodies can no longer supply a spark to cross the gap, they crack and must be removed. Links in tire chains yield at last to the friction of ice and pavement and must have others slipped in their stead. No man knoweth when treads shall give out or spark plugs go dead or chain links snap. Yet our progress upstairs, and across the highways of the world in sun and snow is marked by worn out treads, discarded spark plugs and cast-off chains. Useless, abandoned, forgotten, yet the lift and the inspiration and the push of our stairs and ignition and grips of the moment would be futile were it not for the lift and inspiration of the grips of the past. All those things and all those people that have raised us out of the ruck, fired our souls, and have given us a grip upon reality–all, whether they have played their part for an hour or a generation, were indispensable–like Brother James.

Only at the judgment day will those to whom this teacher threw the torch be able to look back and see who it was that fell as they sped on with the eternal flame of truth. Only at that reckoning will they stand up and be counted to whom his uncomplaining acceptance of the rack of suffering and his refusal to shrink from the vista of hateful dependence brought courage and resignation. Only then will God tell Brother and the rest of us the whole "why." Until then He has given us, through Brother James and others, a clue. Our lives are the threads in the Divine tapestry, of which He sees the upper, we the under side.

He continued in a eulogy to a fellow-priest who had also died recently, and expressed his thoughts on the priesthood–words that could well have been applied to himself–linking the two deaths:

> *July 23, 1939.* Father John Harnett came from Santa Cruz, too. At least he spent his early days in the priesthood hard by the site of the Mission of the Holy Cross, and Irish successor to the sons of Castile, ministering to Italians, Portuguese, and native Americans. I do not know whether Brother James and Father John ever met in Santa Cruz. But they went to heaven within a few days of each other from the City of Angels. And all that has been written of Brother James could be penned of Father Harnett, except that the latter's illness, while painful, was not as prolonged. But the priest's career, from a worldly viewpoint, had just begun. Erstwhile rector of St. John's Cathedral, he had accomplished an historic task in the restoration of his last charge, the Mission of San Luis Obispo. He had other and greater plans, but, as with Junipero Serra, others must carry them out. A new link must be fitted in, a new tread installed to lift men to God.
>
> A new link! I wonder if those who read of that priest's death and his burial from the Old Mission realized how far that chain reaches of which John Harnett and Junipero Serra were part. Back over land and sea, through peace and pillage, through race and tribe, to the very hands of Christ the Redeemer! For the priesthood is not a self-assured role–"You have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you," and neither this Spaniard nor that Irishman nor any other of that unbroken line ever laid hands upon himself and proclaimed that he had been ordained from among men to offer sacrifice. They spoke with authority only because they know that the Bishop, whose hands had been laid upon them, had himself felt the hands of another placed upon his head, and that other, another, and thus back to the great High Priest who had said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost" to His Apostles. And if naught else–and those who knew him knew him to be much more–John Harnett was a worthy link between sinners and their God. His hands are folded on his breast now, but there are hundreds of thousands for whom he broke the Bread of Life, and there is an untold army upon whose heads he poured the saving waters of Baptism. His ears are stopped with dust, but who shall number the sins and the sorrows that have been poured into them, and through them into the Heart of God, forever to be forgiven and forgotten? Silent are his smiling lips, for they have found the peace they had so often assured to others: "Go in peace, and God be with!" Brother James Murphy and Father John Harnett, worn-out links in the chain, you know the answers now. James and John, tell us something of the vision lest we forget!

Not only his own experiences were food for his column, but anything he had heard or read that portrayed his own philosophy of the

priestly role, he included in "Sage and Tumbleweed."

> *May 3, 1936.* One of the problems that pastors face in all Church societies is the human element, the danger of jealousies that will creep in, of family feuds that will be carried even into the service of the Lord of Love. It has been thus since time began, and the wise pastor is he who sees all, allows for much, expects but little, and says nothing in such cases, save where a charitable word will heal a breach. I have just heard of one such priest, long since gathered to the saints, who had allotted the sweeping of the church to two ladies, each of whom took a week in alternation. But, either before or after his selection of his helpers, they fell out, and the quarrel soon found expression in their task. Mrs. A., in her week in charge, would sweep all the dust under Mrs. B.'s pew. In the following week, Mrs. B. would return the compliment in kind. Thus it went until the padre learned of the carryings-on and sent for both dames one afternoon. They came to the church and discovered their pastor sweeping the dust from under the pew where it had last been deposited. Broom in hand, he quietly preached to them on charity and good example. Before he had finished, they were both on their knees and in tears. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. A. was taken seriously ill, and the first to her side, when she heard of it, was Mrs. B. "Sure, and it was only my mouth that was talkin' then," she explained, when asked about her previous conduct. I wonder in what theology old Father H_____ ever learned how to dig up the dirt and preach on it with such telling effect?

The Padre was tireless in trying to find jobs for his parishioners, whether they were young ladies recently graduated or older men who had lost jobs. His letters held many requests to friends asking them to do their utmost to find employment for them. He also wrote encouraging letters to young people struggling in their new careers, empathizing with them. They seemed to be able to share with him their most intimate thoughts and dreams:

> *March 22, 1936.* Years ago in the Adirondacks, I asked an artist whether he had beheld a certain vista, locally famed. "Yes, it is one of those spots that make you catch your breath." Why does beauty affect us so? Is it perhaps that, in the presence of glory beyond his power to describe, man's subconscious realization of the limitations of mortality actually brings him to the brink of eternity? "I shall burst if I can't tell you this," is a commonplace. But the poet, is in pretty much the same fix. He has dreamed a dream, or heard the whir of angel's wing, and he needs must sing of it, or die. Ten million dollars is the appraisal placed upon the paintings of Vincent Van Gogh, the Dutch painter who died 46 years ago after receiving about $129 for his work in his lifetime. But the pangs of starvation and neglect were

naught beside the agony he suffered in trying to put on canvas the beauty around him. "The color of the Southern countryside made him run a hand over his bewildered eyes. The relentless profound blue of the skies, the burning lemon-yellow of the sun, the blood-red of the soil, the rose of the orchards–how could he paint such incredible colorings? But every morning he rose before dawn, and every night he returned with a finished canvas." Says a critic: "Van Gogh destroyed himself to paint them." There are no statistics on the mortality of those who give their brain-children to the world, and God alone knows of their travail, without benefit of midwife or obstetrician.

Two letters set me off on that line of thought. One comes from a lad who can do things with his pencil, the other from a girl who can do things with her pen. He writes: "Youth, enthusiasm, ideas, such as are found about this school, appeal to me. But competitive creative art? No, I like to work out my problems–with the help of the Egyptians–a plant study–perhaps a Chinese praying priest–a cloud floating by. I like to take the things I like and try to transplant them together: You know what I mean." Alas, I fear I do. And may God give you strength.

Writes the girl: "I have become a little more practical. I don't say I am entirely smooth, nor have I gained the total perspective on life that I, with perhaps the rest of the universe, am hunting, but I do feel myself trying. I only hope I can have enough courage to look always forward and hope I will acquire in God's good time poise of both body and soul. And that I may write–God! that I may write. I suppose that is my strongest passion and wish–I realize that it is not so much the gift of word magic that I need as it is the will to do, which in me sleeps so soundly and has to be probed and bludgeoned into action. Anyhow, I am trying to do a little work every day–exercise this invalid of a once strong gift–that my song may not die, for it is frantic and too young to go." Amen, sister! And for that tired feeling, I know of nothing that bludgeoneth more than a weekly column, save a daily column. It is splendid, too, for inhibitions.

He drew his own inspiration from everyday encounters such as the following one a short distance from the Alabama Hills:

> *May 7, 1939.* Not a mile north of where Lone Pine Creek has worn a path through this nut-brown dyke, and but a stone's toss from the draw in which the Paiutes still lay their dead, a half-hidden road slips across the aqueduct and disappears around a sandy shoulder. Follow it, and soon, by two ruts that climb where there is no room for more, you will come to a hidden vale, looking like verdigris left in a brassy socket whence the jewel had been wrenched, encircling claws bent back and broken. This is the Owens' place, where a few fruit trees and an acre or two of alfalfa drink all the water that gathers in a rockbound gorge to your right. Pause, if you will, in this Valhalla,

but if you know the way you will press on to the heights above. Your path will wind about boulders bigger than the house you live in, through crevices just wide enough for passage. In a minute you will stoop to go under a straddling thousand tons of red granite, and there you may dip a convenient pannikin into a slab-covered, cold and limpid pool. Here the Owens' domain ends. Now clamber up a steep and sandy slope, drop again to where a couple of tiny plum trees have been planted by a trickle from beneath a rock; across where gray fragments betoken a blasted trail, then under a cable strung from a flat pillar to a promontory far above. A wheelbarrow seems strangely lost here, but it marks the point at which the trail grows so narrow that only a pack or overhead transport is further feasible. Climb up still 100 yards, avoiding walking on the young grapevines cuddled in a damp spot by the wall of the defile, and you will suddenly find yourself standing beneath a cottonwood at Jim's place.

Jim Kenna is well-known to us all, his easy smile and his packboard being equally familiar sights on Main Street, or as he plods lonely home to the hills after a day's work proffered by Rudy or some other understanding heart. He came into our midst from a New Jersey home a few years back "because too many relatives moved in on mother after father died," and since then has eked out enough for meals from odd jobs about town, and somewhere in the hills has found a home. This is his latest habitat, taken up as a mining claim. His discovery monument stands in his front yard. You may find, as I did, that Jim is not alone in his mountain fastness, for on either flank of the green hut for which Jim had hauled every bit of lumber up this canyon from Lone Pine I found one of the Hancock boys. Hiram lay on a cot on the downhill side, his shoes untied, his hat pulled down over his unshaven chin. George, who, when he unlimbered the six-footedness which marks all of his kin, looked for all the world like the great Emancipator, whiskers and all, sat astraddle a chair, his forehead dropped on his hands. The boys will answer if you speak, but conversation is rather unnecessary up here, where they have everything. Fifty yards above you come out on the ridge of the Alabama, with your back to Owens Lake, your face to the snow-veined Sierra, ten miles off to the west. Jim hopes some day to be able to purchase a second-hand pullman and set it on the crest, combining a million-dollar view with the luxury once made for millionaires.

We ate together in the eight-by-ten shack the day I found Jim's home, Jim and Hiram and George and I. We had a potato apiece, a piece of corn bread "made from the corn we grind on the grinder out there on the rock, with a little soda and water," washed down with chocolate sweetened with corn syrup. There was no money for sugar, and they were saving the fruit for supper. As Jim bent over the stove he had dragged through this fantastic chasm I read his neat handwriting on the paper pinned under the window. "Needs" was the title, and they were listed below in order of importance.

Number one was "Pray and read the Bible daily." Farther down were "Get and answer mail" and "Milk for George." There too were a bill to be paid and a job he had promised to do for somebody in town, one hour's walk from where we sat.

"Trouble is," ventured George, lifting his head for a moment as we resumed our places outside after lunch, "we don't understand what the Bible means." I nodded, and wondered what Brigham Young or Joseph Smith would have said to such heresy. For the Hancocks had come hither from the banks of Utah's Virgin River. But we did not argue. Argument is futile up there where you can lie on your back in the sun and watch a buzzard sweep across the segment of sky bitten off by the canyon's rim, or set your watch by the train that twice a day subtends the arc formed by the cleft and the valley floor. You can hear the water dropping from beneath the scabrous boulders as you look out under your tilted hat at the hummingbird on the cable above, watch him as he darts at the salmon tassel of a thistle by the sheltering ledge where you have stretched your bed. They say there is talk of war overseas, but up here there are just wild onions, hummingbirds, Karo syrup for sweetening, and a rule of life that begins with "pray and read the Bible daily," and says, "Pay bill," and Get milk for George."

A short six months later after receiving the letter from Bishop Scher, praising him on his summer vacation school, the Padre received another letter from him in an entirely different tone. As noted previously, Father Crowley and Bishop Scher had different modes of opertion when it come to finances and reporting. The Padre was more into present day type of "creative financing," looking at the long-range gain, but forgetting about burdens put on the Bishop who was ultimately responsible for unpaid debts.

"Going over your last reports I regret that I must place the following charge or violations of rules against you:

1. Under the circumstances your delay of 5 months and remittance only after 5 notices seem to take on the nature of defiance.

2. Not only was the rule of a monthly statement badly violated but thereby the knowledge of contracted and unpaid bills was kept from me.

3. These obligation during the 5 months in question unfortunately reach the approximate amount of $400.

4. Improvements and repairs made run over $200 which is beyond the amount permitted for a parish in your class.

5. Jan. 4th, 1936, permission was granted to expend $100 for reconditioning show rooms under hall, not $250.

6. Heating system could not be installed without written permission. I had a right to know the nature of same, operating costs,

etc. Suppose one were to install too costly a plant in operation for such a poor parish, what could the Bishop do post factum? Other pastors have observed the rule. San Juan B. furnace donated, permission granted. Lemoore, furnace by public subscription, permission granted.

7. I notice that a Ford has been purchased and monthly instalments are being paid out of parish funds. If this auto is to be a parish car, how could you purchase same without permission? If you are taking the money in lieu of salary you are violating another rule, you are creating the same old mess in case of a change, the very thing we are trying to remedy. As a former Chancellor you should know better. Whose car will it really be?

8. The $50 for Summer School were a trust fund and apparently spent for other purposes.

9. Question marks to say the least are very vague. Would any other corporation accept them?

"Now may I make the following comments. In first place you created the debt in Lone Pine. You asked to return feeling that you could make it go. Your predecessors, Frs. Nelson and Stross did and left a handsome balance, without the aid of rents which you now collect. Why?

"Your Cathedral record is the same. Unpaid bills, salaries etc. piled up by the thousands. Your successor makes and keeps a clean slate, pays higher assessments, salaries in full, etc. Why?

"Now in Lone Pine you are going back to the old ways to the tune of $400 or more in 5 months. When the burden then grows too crushing will you throw it once more on the Bishop and your poor successor? It shall not be.

"Dear Monsignor pardon me, but if rules and regulations mean nothing to you then *in nomine Domini* seek another field. Papers can be had on application. Should you however wish to continue in your present field I shall give you until Dec. 31,1936, to study the rules, to retrench and set your house in order. Failing in this I shall then so place you that you will no longer be annoyed with monthly statements and obligations that cannot be met. I am sorry to say this but the time for mutual understanding positively has come. Obedience put into practice, not merely preached, will see you thru. Financially I expect to keep the ship steady with God's help and it is up to you not to sulk but to help.

"You need not at all feel that I am typing these lines with venom or vengeance in my heart but merely for the good of the cause and of all concerned. With my knowledge no man will put a parish hopelessly on the rocks. That is what I am here for.

"With every good wish for a happy solution of your present problem,

I am

"Yours sincerely, Phillip G. Scher, Bishop of Monterey-Fresno."[66]

There is no record of the Padre's response, but no doubt such a strict reprimand must have caused him considerable anguish. Some adjustments must have been made, especially since he would have been very reluctant to leave his beloved Inyo–a very strong possibility. Apparently, some misunderstandings were cleared up by personal talks with the Bishop, and no doubt by some changes relating to the rules of financial management of a parish. In May of 1937 Bishop Scher wrote again, this time in a more conciliatory tone:

"I am sorry you left me rather unsettled and unhappy, owing to a wrong impression or conclusion. I say 'wrong' for truly I had no changes in mind for you either on that day of our conversation or at any time since then. For this you can positively take my word. In fact I am not planning any changes either of pastors or of any offices now held by any pastors or assistants. ...

"In conclusion, then I wish to assure you of two things, viz: a) That in serious matters I seek counsel not of one individual but of more, even though they live some a great distance from Fresno. Needless to say, that prayer is added for proper guidance in my final decision. b) You may feel perfectly happy in Lone Pine and consider yourself a *persona grata*, provided you meet your obligations and conform to the Statutes and rules. Of this I entertain no doubt now, after the removal of some misunderstandings and so I count on your loyalty and good will for the good of our cause.

"Hoping these lines will dispel any doubt or anxiety you may have had and appreciating the sentiments to which you give expression, I am, Yours sincerely in Christ, Phillip G. Scher, Bishop of Monterey-Fresno."[67]

In a letter to the Bishop written in response to a Christmas donation and praise for his work in the *Central California Register* drive, the Padre opened up his heart:

"I am indeed grateful for your kind and liberal Christmas remembrance of Inyo and its pastor. It will go a long way towards spreading cheer hereabout, and the spirit that prompted it will carry Christmas far, far into the future.

"Your congratulatory letters, both to my people and to myself, are alike precious. You know from bitter experience how lonely the outpost becomes at seasons, and how far away seems the tent of the general. A slap on the shoulder does help, one is no longer alone. The *Register* drive has given my maverick sheep an opportunity to feel that they are part of

the larger flock, a feeling hitherto hard to implant, because they considered that they should be the objects of, not the doers of, Catholic Action. The drive has given them an *esprit de corps*, so if they have helped you in your program they have been amply repaid.

"My own part, both in guiding them and in furnishing 'Sage and Tumbleweed' each week, I consider purely in line of duty. I told Mike Sullivan nine years ago that I would furnish him with a weekly column for the *Register* if he could use it, as I felt that if God had given me a knack of whipping together something the average reader could digest, it was my duty to do so, to help the Catholic Press. When my transfer to the desert took place, I renewed my pledge to carry on. It has not been easy, but from time to time a little straw indicates that at least some good is being done, and even if the matter is not always doctrinal or in the manner of the Schoolmen, if it induces just one person a week to pick up a Catholic paper it is not wasted.

"My other efforts here,–well, I deserve less credit than comes my way. God has blessed me, or burdened me, with a restless energy that gives me no peace. Much of this faculty has been spent in fruitless or misdirected labor at times, but inevitably, God helping, somebody, sometime, will reap the harvest. I should be grateful that I have been spared to see some little token of the coming wheat.

"May the Infant King bring you a little bit of heaven this Christmas, forgetfulness for a bit of your crosses, and give you peace. Sincerely and obediently in Christ, John J. Crowley." [68]

Thus, did two great souls reach out to each other in spite of their basic differences in temperament–the one as the general and the other as the foot-soldier, yet both committed to the same cause.

8

DEATH VALLEY CHRONICLES

Death Valley had a fascination and sometimes dread for most people, but for the Padre it was an endless source of spectacular scenery, larger-than-life characters, and a remarkable history. He loved to share all of these with his readers. The railroads had a special place in the history and development of Death Valley:

January 19, 1936. "If you build better mousetraps than your neighbor," it has been said, "the world will beat a path to your door." "And later build a railroad into your front yard," might have been added. The desert has not gone in much for mousetraps, since it has done well with bigger game, including the genus homo, but it has succeeded in attracting the tentacles of the iron octopus. In from more populous and more pleasant places the streams of steel have crept, vanishing, like their companion rivers of water, in some alkaline sink or gaunt mining camp. Seldom do these searching claws, like those of a cat reaching into a cage, meet those of another. With few exceptions in our particular fastness, the Mojave desert is a hub whence railroads serve as spokes to the surrounding rim of civilization. And each spoke can tell a story.

Down from the North in the days of gold came the Central Pacific, built by Ogden Mills to tap the mines along the eastern slope of the Owens Valley. Narrow-gauge, it ended at Keeler on the shore of Owens Lake, at that time a body of water 25 miles across. Today, one may walk across the "lake" dry-shod, and, twice a week, a gallantly puffing toy locomotive drags a string of creaking gondolas, laden with marble for the soda plant, through the dunes that have replaced the lapping waves. One of the engines was retired the other day. It had kept step with the march of time by being successively transformed from a wood-burner to a coal-burner to an oil-burner. But the day came when further face-lifting was useless, and it was wafted to the nirvana of iron horses. It will not be long, I fear, for no replacements are being made, before the ancient cars will be sent over the hill. Their faded brick-red sides still bear the painted legend, "All persons are warned against lounging or sleeping under this car, as it may be put in motion at any time."

The narrow-gauge came after gold. The broad-gauge, built by the Southern Pacific up from the south, was more subtle. Los Angeles wanted water and Inyo had the water. So to haul cement and material for the aqueduct construction the railroad came and met the narrow-gauge at the hybrid junction called Owenyo. The net result was gold for Los Angeles, for it was water that made possible the mushroom spread of the Southern metropolis. And the record shows that the Southern Pacific charged, and received, enough for the freight transported to build several nice little railroads, if it were so minded. Now, its task ended and the passenger traffic being confined to the excellent state highway, the broad-gauge is costing the railroad company about $100 a day. As soon as the Mono Lake project is completed, a year or two hence, there is little doubt that even this will pass away.

The Pacific Coast Borax Company decided to replace the picturesque but inadequate 20-mule teams with a railroad up from Ludlow on the Santa Fe. Thus came the Tonopah and Tidewater. This line was finally pushed to Beatty, Nev., where it met another, feeling its way down from Goldfield, the Bullfrog, and Rhyolite. The objective of the latter was gold; the T. and T. sought borax. From the T. and T. at Death Valley Junction, the company ran a narrow-gauge to Ryan, the site of the borax mine on the brink of Death Valley. From Ryan another and smaller line was built around the mountain to the various workings. Today, Ryan is a tourist resort, and for a dollar you may ride on what is advertised as "The Baby-Gage." But the link to Death Valley Junction is gone, and the ties have crackled in stoves from Furnace Creek to Shoshone. The highway travels along the old right-of-way from Rhyolite to Beatty, and Scotty has an elaborate fire protection system down in Tie Canyon, near his castle, to guard the 70 miles of ties he bought when the last train had run from Goldfield to Beatty. The T. and T. now runs a gasoline motor car to Crucero, the crossing of the Union Pacific. Two men handle all the mail, the passengers, the express, and the driving. If life insurance policies were written for railroads, I would not recommend the Tonapah and Tidewater as a good risk. Railroad mortality in the Mojave is close to 100 per cent.

When men found gold at Randsburg, the Santa Fe sent a feeder up from Kramer to Johannesburg, four miles from the steep hill that held the Yellow Aster mine. A few months ago, the Santa Fe reached out for its little branch and gathered it in. Joburg has heard its last locomotive whistle.

Skidoo, on the western scarp of Death Valley, was discovered in the early years of this century, and Bob Montgomery and others were anxious to have a railroad. So, J.R. Hayden, present freight traffic manager of the Santa Fe, was sent by that railroad to reconnoiter the route between Johannesburg and Skidoo, via Searles Lake, Ballarat, and Wildrose Canyon. He estimated the cost at seven to eight million dollars, and reported against the project, much to the chagrin of the enthusiastic Skidooians. It is doubtful whether

the line could have been constructed before the camp became a memory.

Shorty Harris found Skidoo; yet, until the day they buried him beside Jimmy Dayton in the shadow of a mesquite on the valley floor, he never owned and seldom used any other method of transportation than a burro for his belongings, he trudging by its side. A friend met him trekking through the Amargosa with his burros, and Shorty opined that he might be bound for Goldfield. "Goldfield? Why, that'll take you three days. Why don't you get rid of your burros, Shorty, and buy a car? Then you could get to Goldfield in three hours instead of three days." Shorty waited to assimilate this information. After a little he meditated out loud. "Three hours to Goldfield instead of three days. But what would I do after I got there?"

Speaking of Shorty Harris, the Padre's column related the dedication of the memorial to Shorty and his friend Jimmy Dayton. Shorty had died two years previously:

> *March 29, 1936.* When Shorty Harris finally took to bed because of the pains that finished him, he was mightily upset at heart about something. One day he put it up to Charlie Brown, one of our supervisors, who had given Shorty a home when the old prospector could no longer keep up with his burros. "Charlie, is it true that they have moved that road aways from Jimmy's grave?" He referred to the relocation of the highway from Furnace Creek to Saratoga Springs along the west side of Death Valley. It was on this road that Jimmy Dayton perished, and his dog and cat and horses beside him, one August day in 1898, and he was buried where they found him. Shorty had asked to be "planted" near Jimmy, "the best friend I ever had." "Yes, Shorty, that's true. They have moved the road about 50 feet west." "Can you still see Jimmy's grave?" "Easily." "All right, then." For poor Shorty, in death as in life, wanted a little bit of the spotlight. He must have been happy to see the celebration his pals and admirers staged at the unveiling of the memorial tablet by his grave last week.
>
> Charlie Brown's wife and Harry Gower uncovered the bronze plaque. Mrs. Brown is Dad Fairbanks' daughter, the same Dad who has rescued some scores of lost travelers from Death Valley. Harry Gower is Superintendent of the Borax Company. It was Harry who took his wife's ironing board in 1898, burned Jimmy Dayton's name and R.I.P. on it, and set it by the mound beneath the mesquite. The permanent marker reads:
>
> "Bury me beside Jimmy Dayton in the valley we loved. Above me write: 'Here lies Shorty Harris, a single blanket jackass prospector.'
>
> "Epitaph requested by Shorty (Frank) Harris, beloved gold hunter, 1856-1934. Here James Dayton, pioneer, perished, 1898.
>
> "To these trailmakers whose courage matched the dangers of the land, this bit of earth is dedicated forever."

Wallace Campbell of Darwin, himself a hard-rock miner, wrote a poem at the time of Shorty's death, and the Padre incorporated it in his talk at the dedication. Funny, but it seemed to me that Telescope Peak had a mist on it as I turned away from the crowd.

THE LAST TRAIL

He lies in state, as well becomes a knight
Of that intrepid, desert-loving clan,
Whose numbers soon will all have climbed the height
That marks the passing of the burro man.

The last camp made, no more his eager feet
Shall search the dim, yet never-ending trail.
Through winter's chill, or summer's thirsty heat.
His task is done; perhaps he's found the Grail

That beckons all who dwell in this domain
Of rugged hills, and drifting velvet sand;
A mystic thread–for none can speak its name–
Which gently binds us in a phantom strand.

So stake for him a claim, six feet by four,
Where thorned mesquite and varnished greasewood grow;
There let him sleep, beneath the valley floor;
And men may pass, but God will know.

Soft be his couch, beneath the golden drift
Of sunlight, shining thus since time began,
While lonely winds their chanting voices lift
To sing a Requiem for the burro man!

A few points that stick in my memory from the Padre's discourse: Death Valley has known the basest passions, and the noblest sentiments of the human soul... Its salt beds have received both women's tears and the sweat of honest men... Jimmy Dayton plodding along in the valley in the heat. Shorty adventuring into the hills, both meeting in the grave–that is life...Zaccheus, in St. Luke's Gospel, was low of stature and could not see Christ for the crowds. Perhaps that was Shorty Harris' way of finding God, by getting away from the crowd... The nearest approximation to eternity I know of here below is working with a single-jack at the end of a tunnel... The desert, where men are distant, but God is near...

Pete Aguereberry, who shared with Shorty the discovery of the ledge that gave birth to Harrisburg in the 1900s, chatted with me after the

ceremonies, telling me an interesting tale of the origin of "Harrisburg." He said the original name was a combination of his name and Shorty's, Harrisberry. But some Pennsylvania Dutchmen camped over in the next canyon, who probably knew how to write and figure, called it Harrisburg, which stuck. Shorty was not much on "larnin," and it is related that he sold 16 one-eighth interests in his Rhyolite find.

He was a tall spinner of tales, Shorty, and only the old-timers knew where fact ended and fancy began. Mrs. Ryan, the "Silver Queen" of Cerro Gordo fame, recounted one of his yarns to me a decade and a half ago. He averred that he had a grudge against some claim-jumper, and vowed vengeance when, as, and if. One day at Big Pine, he saw the offender asleep upon a couch and sneaked out to get his gun. He had just sighted it when the intended victim raised his head and Shorty discovered that it was not his enemy, but a total stranger. "God was with me that day," he piously ejaculated, " I almost killed the wrong man."

The *Inyo Register* of March 19, 1936 carried the story on its front page: "Memorial Unveiled at Desert Graves–Able Address Given by Rev. J.J. Crowley.

"About two hundred people were present, including Colonel White, Superintendent of Sequoia National Park and Death Valley National Monument, friends of Shorty and Jimmy, and desert-lovers from all over California, at the dedication of the memorial at the graves of Jimmy Dayton and Shorty Harris in Death Valley last Saturday afternoon.

"Acting Director T.R. Goodwin of the Monument opened the program with an explanation of the history of the spot, Jimmy's death there in 1898 and Shorty's desire to be buried by his side. He thanked Supervisor Charles Brown, who had donated the bronze tablet in memory of these pioneers, and had given Shorty a home in his latter days. Supervisor Brown spoke briefly on his happiness in the tribute now being paid to Shorty. Mr. Goodwin read telegrams from absent well-wishers whose hearts were gladdened by the occasion. Albert Stovall, who had worked side by side with Shorty in the old days, related three characteristically humorous anecdotes of the diminutive miner and told of his affection for Jimmy Dayton, whom Shorty called "the best friend I ever had." William Caruthers, writer, friend of Shorty's and of that lamented lover of the desert men, Harry Carr, told of his respect for Shorty, and of how he hoped some day to publish his notes on this lovable soul. He pointed out that Shorty had spent his life looking for gold, but that today, when this group had gathered to pay him tribute, he had found true gold.

"Father Crowley, Catholic pastor of Inyo county, gave an address 'In Memoriam.'

"Col. White thanked all who came and showed how the Park Service had found in Death Valley the generation of miners that had succeeded Shorty and Jimmy, and through good roads and memorials such as this endeavoring to render accessible and perpetuate the grandeur of the valley and to assure the miners every protection in their labors. Mrs. Brown, assisted by Harry Gower, Superintendent of the Pacific Coast Borax interests in Death Valley, then unveiled the tablet which reads: [as above]

"The address by Rev. John J. Crowley was as follows:

'My dear friends:

'When first I beheld Jimmy Dayton's grave, many years ago, portions of his wagon were still here, and the bones of his horses rested where they had fallen. Over his grave stood the ironing board on which Harry Gower had inscribed with a red-hot poker, "Jimmy Dayton, August, 1898. R.I.P." It struck me then and comes back to me today that Jimmy's life, and his death and burial in this spot, were most fitting links between the pioneers who had given this valley its name and the generation that is ours.

'Death Valley is an arid place, its rains infrequent, its verdure quickly withering under its summer suns. Fathomless beds of salt mark where its waters disappear. But, let us not forget that much of it is the salt of women's tears and the toil of honest men, many of whom have left their bones to bleach beneath these burning skies. For this way passed the Manly party in '49, to camp a few miles from here at Bennett's Well, there to wait in agony while the brave Manly and Rogers climbed the Panamints and found their way to San Fernando Mission and brought back help. Here the basest passions of human nature have found expression, for here men sawed their wagons in two lengthwise when they parted company, in order that neither might benefit by the dissolution of partnership, and here men stole during the darkness the common food, and that scarce enough for one. Here men quarreled and fought and died. Yet here was shown the unutterable depth of mother love; here men and women permitted no hardship to rob them of their faith and trust in the providence of God. Never can California forget the nobility of Manly, who, when he reached San Fernando, was beseeched by those who listened, that he should not return to this hopeless spot, where undoubtedly his party had long since perished. How he returned and saved them all, is one of the most heroic pages in our story. "Greater love than this no man hath, that he lay down his life for his friend."

'With such as these Jimmy Dayton was, and is, a fitting link. A link with

this effete generation, that seeks the softer things of life, wants all its facts upholstered, its truths sugar-coated, and would even attempt to palliate the thought of death itself. These men accepted privation as their lot, they battled with nature in the raw, they walked abroad with death.

'When I heard that Shorty Harris had asked to be buried here by Jimmy's side I could not think of any more appropriate epitaph than that written by Robert Louis Stevenson for himself. You will recall it:

Under the wide and starry sky
Dig the grave and let me lie:
Glad did I live and gladly die,

This be the verse you grave for me:
Here he lies where he longed to be;
Home is the sailor, home from the sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

'But when I read the inscription upon this bronze tablet we dedicate today I found that Shorty had paraphrased the same thought. "Bury me beside Jimmy in the valley we loved, and write 'Here lies a single blanket jackass prospector.'" Happy am I too that the kind hands that have fashioned this memorial have called Shorty a "hunter," a hunter of gold. For through all his days he followed that elusive phantom, through Bullfrog, and Rhyolite and Harrisburg. Somewhere just ahead was his big bonanza, which would bring him at the last peace and rest. And in this did he not teach us the lesson of all life? Shorty in the hill country, in the high places, forever adventuring, and Jimmy down in the valley, slowly crawling through the monotonous sage with his team, both pushing ever forward towards the day when there should be no more seeking, no more toil.

'But yesterday a good friend placed in my hands a poem written about Shorty Harris by another miner, Wallace Campbell of Darwin. I feel that it should be read here: [then is quoted "The Last Trail" as in the "Sage and Tumbleweed" column]

'Requiem! Requiem is the Latin word for rest, and that is what we come to bid you today, Shorty and Jimmy, rest. Not merely the rest and the peace that will be yours six feet beneath the floor of the valley you loved, secure from scorching sun and caressing moonbeams, oblivious to the creeping shadows of the rugged hills that stand guard above you, where neither your beloved Telescope's snowy ramparts nor the swinging stars can fill your tired eyes. No, the rest we bid you is rest, eternal,

rest for your souls, rest in God. That is the end of life, for which man was made.

'Why should I, a Catholic priest, stand here today and speak thus above the graves of men and of whom it is not recorded that they ever belonged to any organized religion? No church bell ever broke the silence here, and they traveled far from book and candle. Yet I, a minister of the oldest church in Christendom, which holds its members to the strictest accountability in their relations with God, fear not to ask mercy for these souls!

'It is true that Shorty, left an orphan at an early age, is said to have been raised by a Catholic priest in Providence, R.I., but beyond that we find no trace of formal religion in these lives. My friends, I am here because the Catholic Church teaches that religion is a matter between a man and his God, that God holds a man responsible only for the graces he has received, no more and no less, and that each will be judged according to his lights. I am here, we are here, because we prayerfully believe that Shorty and Jimmy did "the best they knew how," the best they could, and that the God who made them, and the Christ who died to save them, will temper justice with mercy.

'Remember the nineteenth chapter of the Gospel of Saint Luke? "Behold there was a man named Zaccheus, who was the chief of the publicans, and he was rich. And he sought to see Jesus who he was, and he could not for the crowd, because he was low of stature. And running before, he climbed up into a sycamore tree, that he might see him, for he was to pass that way. And when Jesus was come to the place, looking up he saw him, and said to him: Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for this day I must abide in thy house. And he made haste and came down; and received him with joy. And when all saw it, they murmured, saying that he was gone to be a guest with a man that was a sinner. But Zaccheus standing, said to the Lord: Behold, Lord,the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wronged any man of anything I restore him fourfold. Jesus said to him: This day is salvation come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

'Shorty too was low of stature and perhaps he could not see Jesus for the crowds. So he came to the desert, where men are distant and God is near. It has been my experience that the thoughts of desert men are long, long thoughts. There is plenty of time for thought upon God while you sit behind the clopping hoofs beneath the eternal and infernal sun of Death Valley. And the nearest approximation to eternity that I know

of on the sphere is working with a single jack at the end of a tunnel.'"[69]

The Padre dedicated another column to Shorty Harris in which Pete Aguereberry described his prospecting days with Shorty:

> *February 5, 1939.* "I was tying my shoes, Shorty Harris was just getting up, and I said, 'Shorty, I dreamt last night that I found a mine.' He laughed. 'That so, Frenchy? Not here. This country is no damn good. All lime and schist. Let's get goin'. So we left Blackwater Spring and started up the trail from Death Valley on our way to Ballarat.
>
> "I had met Shorty for the first time two days before down at Furnace Creek, and since we were both going over the hill we bunched our burros and came on together.
>
> "It was the Fourth of July, 1905. Shorty rode on ahead while I, who had never seen this country before, did a little prospecting without getting out of the saddle. 'Nothin' there' Shorty yelled when I pointed out this dike to him as he rode past.
>
> "But I stopped anyhow, got off the burro, and began to look around. Pretty soon I picked up a piece of float colored like the rock I had seen at the Jumbo mine in Goldfield. I didn't even have a pick along, as the pack burros had gone ahead with Shorty, so I hit the rock on a ledge that stuck out close by. In one of the halves I thought I saw gold, but I tried it in every light for a few minutes to make certain it was not pyrites or peacock copper. But it looked the same from every angle, and I began to feel sure. I searched again, found another piece, and finally I knocked off a hunk of the quartz. There was free gold sticking out all over it.
>
> "I got gold fever then and there, and my hands began to shake as if I had a chill. Then I remembered my dream, which had seemed so real the night before. I also remembered that I had dreamed the same thing twice before, and in those dreams I had thought I was awake, too. Was I awake now? Did you ever feel that way?"

Pete Aguereberry was telling me about the discovery of gold on the butte in the flat above Emigrant Canyon. From where we stood at the entrance to his mine the olive-grey plateau rolled away from us toward the path of the Forty-niners; the white shoulders of Telescope emerged a half mile southward; behind us the saddle, piebald with snow, cradled the road to Aguereberry Point, whence you could look straight down for a mile into the depths of the American continent.

Pete had built this road and tried to coax men to come up for the view. But it was gold, not scenery, they sought in these mountains, and it was Uncle Sam who finally drew a circle about this fascinating hollow, declared it a national monument, and immortalized the name of this 65-year-old immigrant from the French Pyrenees.

The tourists rolling by do not suspect that the corrugated iron hut snuggling in the butte, houses the man who has made history here, nor that behind the hogback can still be discerned the foundations and the middens of Harrisburg, the town that blossomed when Pete dismounted from his burro 33 years ago. This was the town that Pete built, yet it was named for Shorty Harris. Harrisburg is gone. Shorty Harris lies buried, hard by the highway, down in Death Valley as he wanted, for he loved the headlines. Aguereberry Point remains, and Pete still…

Another desert prospector often mentioned in the Padre's columns was Johnny Mills:

February 17, 1935. Johnny Mills sits on the travertine coping outside the luxurious lounge at Furnace Creek Inn, around him a gaping group of cloak and suit magnates, butter and egg men, and their ladies. Just beneath his outstretched arm, Furnace Creek tumbles into the turquoise swimming pool, spilling over into goldfish ponds, chattering amongst the palms on its way to the green isle of the ranch below. His eyes, baked to a milky lavender–like the glass that has lain under the inexorable sun–follow his finger as he lives again the romance and the tragedy of Death Valley, grim, dark bowl spreading far and away, floored with dazzling salt, as if one had chipped the enamel from the basin's bottom. No other living man has lived so long in that dread sink; few knew its secrets half as well as Johnny. Grizzled and dwarfed like the shrubs that cling to the scorched washes of the valley by his 40 years of lonely trekking, prospecting, and borax mining, he is as outré in this, one of the most swank resorts in America, a Mahatma Gandhi on Market Street, yet he belongs even more eminently than the specimens of colemanite or the ox-yoke on display in the lounge. This son of the great silences and vast sufferings dwells in a palace and endures the "Ohs" and "Ahs" of the quintessence of "cake-eaters." The while he dreams of the lost Breyfogle mine.

No two stories agree on Breyfogle's history, save that there was a Jacob Breyfogle, and that he did find gold ore of almost fabulous value on the brink of Death Valley. Chalfant starts him from Austin, Nev., where he was a blacksmith in the '60s, on a prospecting trip with two horses and supplies. His horses escaped one night while he camped by a spring. This disaster, coupled with the heat, so bewildered him that some Indians found him wandering, temporarily insane, took him into camp, and nursed him back to his senses. Somewhere in his crazed meanderings he had knocked a piece of rock from a ledge, and the inability of himself or hundreds of others ever to locate this ore has led to one of the most intensive "lost mine" hunts in history. Bourke Lee says that Breyfogle had acted as a guide for a party of Southerners bound from Austin to Yuma, and returning alone was set upon

by Indians near Daylight Springs and terribly beaten. Recovering consciousness only after he had loped into Austin on his horse, he could not recall where he had found the ore he brought with him.

J. Frank Dobie of the University of Texas got his version of the Breyfogle mine from a man who had often looked for it, and who was well acquainted with Gooding, who had frequently listened to Breyfogle's own narrative of his experience. When rich silver ore was uncovered in Austin in 1862 by the hoof of a stumbling pony, all the foot-loose miners in California raced for the latest "excitement." Among those to attempt the hundreds of weary miles to the strike were three Angelenos, Breyfogle, O'Bannion, and McLeod. Camping one night at a rock tinaja on the Panamint slope of Death Valley, McLeod and O'Bannion stretched out together near the water-hole. Breyfogle made his bed a few hundred yards down the hill. Shouts during the night brought him the harrowing knowledge that his companions were being slaughtered by Indians. Seizing his shoes, the only article of clothing he had removed, he raced over the rubble-strewn wash into the valley, where he hid for several hours. So bruised were his feet that he could not put on his shoes, yet in the terrific June sun he struggled across the floor to the Funeral range. His shoes he used as canteens to carry water from an alkaline water-hole, beside which he dared not rest. Seeing a green spot three miles south that suggested a spring, he staggered towards it. Somewhere before reaching it he stumbled first upon some grayish-green, and then a pinkish feldspar ore in which free gold was plainly visible. He gathered up a few pieces and wrapped them in his bandana. The promised oasis proved to be a lone mesquite, with no water, but a plentiful supply of beans. He gorged himself on these and shortly lost his senses, never to return to them again till he reached Baxter Springs, 250 miles north. From here, Dobie's story agrees with the other versions.

Johnny Mills, who is a Catholic, was not long from old St. Mary's College in San Francisco when he drifted to the desert, landing at the World Beater mine, high in the Panamints, as a mucker. There he met Shorty Harris, who was later to discover Bullfrog and Harrisburg, and from him heard of the Breyfogle. With Shorty, he packed into Death Valley, and was prevailed upon by Jimmy Dayton, caretaker of the borax company's ranch at Furnace Creek, to take employment there. From this point d'appui Johnny has looked for 40 years for the Breyfogle, and today its secret is still locked in the bosom of the tantalizing hills, there to remain perhaps till God shall melt them down again at the last curtain. He has examined every prospect-hole in the region. As head prospector for the borax company with 24 others in his employ to seek borax claims, with a bonus of $100 for each location, plus wages and board, he literally combed southern Inyo. He visited Breyfogle's wife and family in San Francisco and could gather no information, save Mrs. Breyfogle's expressed hope that someone would find the

mine in order to vindicate her husband. At the Ferry Building, before the fire, he saw the reddish ore that had started him and others on their search. He even found the assayer who had assayed "the red streak," $60,000 to the ton. He has stood by Shorty Harris' grave in the shadow of Telescope Peak; by Jimmy Dayton's, where he dropped, and his horse beside him, one blistering August day in 1898. He knows where Billy Corcoran lies, Billy, who thought he had found the Breyfogle when he located the National Bank mine at Bullfrog. The wearied questers have sunk by the trail–Johnny alone remains, and answers fool questions and dreams of the red ore in which a fortune gleams.

Johnny had been recounting the hardships suffered by the Manly party on its way through the valley in '49, the party whose privations, thirst, and starvation gave the region its lugubrious title, so often since justified. One of his female listeners interjected, "Why didn't they stop here at the Inn?" Johnny couldn't believe he had heard aright. "I beg pardon, ma'am. What did you ask?" She repeated the question. "Oh," retorted the nimble-witted veteran, "you see, the paint wasn't dry!"

Another story that Johnny Mills told the Padre was about Jimmy Dayton:

March 22, 1936. Johnny Mills gave me a new slant on the eternal triangle when he told me of Jimmy Dayton's wedding. Jimmy, caretaker of the Furnace Creek Ranch in the nineties, had as his solitary companion Johnny Mills, who was some 30 years younger, and used the ranch merely as a base for his prospecting tours around the valley. On one of his journeys into Los Angeles, some wags at the old United States Hotel persuaded Jimmy that life in Death Valley was altogether too lonesome for a man and that the Scriptures themselves had admonished that it was not well for him to be alone. They also hinted to a waitress at the hotel that Jimmy had hidden much wealth beneath the fig trees on the ranch. The net result of their wiles was Jimmy's marriage to the maid before he returned to tell the incredulous Johnny. The day after his arrival at the ranch–he did not bring the wife on that trip–he rode to Ballarat for a letter from her, and, while there, related to Shorty Harris and others that he was now a benedict. Again the wags took charge, and a leader named Doc Trotter solemnly warned Jimmy that he had better get rid of Mills if he intended to bring a wife, the only white woman in the region, into Death Valley. So, when he fetched home the bride on his six-horse wagon, he also brought a man to take Johnny's place, and then took three days to get up courage enough to dismiss the partner of his bachelor days. But, in the interim, the lady had inquired about the fig trees from Johnny, and had learned that her spouse had spent every penny he had ever earned. Whether that was the reason or not, the ro-

mance quickly withered in the parching valley air, and it was not long before Jimmy was single *again.*

Seeing that the Padre is scheduled to speak at the dedication of the bronze tablet and monument over the graves of Jimmy Dayton and Shorty Harris reminds me of the eulogy uttered at Jimmy's burial in August 1898, when Frank Tilton and Dolph Nevares found his body and those of his horses where they had succumbed by the roadside. As they lowered him into the grave they had dug on the spot, Dolph remarked that it was rather a heartless way to bury anybody and couldn't Frank say a few words. Frank's sermon vouched for by himself ran thus: "Jimmy, you lived in the heat, and you died in the heat, an' now you've gone to hell."

The Padre had gained the confidence of Johnny Mills and had frequent chats with him:

December 22, 1935. Seeing Johnny Mills with a water bucket started the subject. I was peeking around the new quarter-million dollar addition to the Furnace Creek Inn at Death Valley when I met him in a plaster-splattered corridor, sheepishly playing water-boy to the artisans. He guessed my thoughts. "Yeah, I know. Imagine Johnny Mills with a bucket of water, or serving water to anybody!" And he dropped his head in mock shame. Things had indeed come to an evil pass when an old desert rat so far forgot his first principles as to truckle water. But he chirked up again in a moment with his old twinkle and asked me to take a look about with him at the improvements. "You know, I think I've done a pretty good job here. Of course, I had never built anything bigger than a hogan or a lean-to before this, but it ain't so bad, is it?"

But to return to the topic that he suggested, and later elaborated on, when we could sit on a concrete flower box on the new roof garden and look over the valley that he has called home for 40 years. I would be glad to meet a statistician who could estimate the amount of hard liquor necessary to recover one ounce of gold or a pound of silver. There may be mines somewhere that have been worked without liquor–I guess you'd call it dry washing, but I have never seen them. Perhaps it is the dust in his lungs, or just plain loneliness or ennui, or downright cussedness, but the average hard-rock miner can travel, like a camel, just so long without a drink. And, when he has reached that time, nor earth nor heaven nor heat nor cold nor distance nor loyalty can deter him and he will not rest until he has drowned his care and cleansed his tonsils and emptied his pockets in a glorious bust. As Johnny puts it, be craves for "a roll in the sawdust," and, like the baby in the soap ads, "he won't be happy till he gets it."

All the old mine foremen knew the symptoms and could tell even before the bucko who had to have his shoes tapped, his clothes washed, or his

tooth pulled that the request for a month's pay and leave to go to town was due shortly. The sugar would be too sweet, the salt would suddenly prove too salty–yes, quarrels were deliberately sought in order to find an excuse for "demandin' me time" and leaving the camp in high dudgeon and with the exultation of an unleashed greyhound. As soon as the jag had run its course, the celebrant would reappear at the workings and would usually find a job awaiting him. It was the customary way of doing such things, and nobody was deceived, but nobody would ever think of calling a spade a spade. It simply wasn't done, you know.

Over at the old Minnietta, Jack Gunn had a chap helping around the quarters, cooking a bit and tending the fires. The last, like all such jobs in Panamint and Death Valley, was no mean chore, as in those valleys the usual order of things is reversed. There you have to dig for wood and climb for water. So little woody vegetation grows on the floors of these sinks that the surest way to secure firewood is to dig up the roots of the greasewood or mesquite bushes. Came a day when the delver for wood felt a great thirst coming upon him, but he knew not in what manner he might appease it. He could not plead that he needed clothes. Gunn had seen to that. Nor shoes, nor tobacco nor aught of creature comforts. He bethought himself of stirring up a quarrel with his master, but even there he was sore pressed to find where in any respect he had been treated ill. And while he thus brooded, he continued to cook and sweep and build fires, and his thirst grew amazingly. And thus it came to pass that one morn which was colder than morns were wont to be at the Minnietta, he had a great fire crackling merrily in the stove when his master entered. Whereupon the good man thought to thank him for his stewardship and remarked: "Aha, you've got her roaring this morning!" And at that instant, the keeper of the flames rose up in anger and shouted, "Roarin', eh? Well, by—, she'll roar no more. Gimme me time." Thus ended another of the thousand and one tales of the great American aridity.

Johnny recalled his own "alcoholic urges" in days of yore, and in particular in the years he worked for the Borax Company at Borate, near Daggett, whence the 20-mule teams trekked to Barstow. Jake Kieffer was the boss, an old desert man himself, and his familiarity with the excuses for Johnny's and others' periodic trips to town made him an understanding foreman. So when Johnny would slip up to Kieffer and begin, "I'm havin' trouble with one of my teeth," Jake wouldn't let him finish, but would agree sympathetically. "That's tough, Johnny. Now teeth are nothin' to fool with. No use trying to doctor it yerself. Just go into Los Angeles an' git a dentist to fix it up right." So away went Johnny to Barstow, there to merge his identity with sawdust for a spell. When he finally returned to work Jake would ask him how he found things in Los Angeles, although knowing in his heart that his listener had never got more than 30 miles from the mine, and Johnny

would just as solemnly lie about the doings in the metropolis of the Angels, "an' so for seven years," my friend went on, "I never got any farther than Barstow. Then one day I heard that Ryan, the general foreman, was coming over for an inspection the next week, an' I was dyin' for a roll in the sawdust before he got to camp. So I goes to Jake an' complained about another tooth. 'Too bad, Johnny, but y'd better have it tended to. An' say, Johnny, did y'ever figure out how many teeth there was in a human bein'?' 'No, I can't say as I ever paid much attention to the number.' 'Well, I was readin' somewheres that there's 36. An' do y'know how many teeth y've had pulled in the past seven years? Just 50, Johnny, just 50. But y'd better not fool with that tooth. Go into Los Angeles and have a dentist fix her up.'"

As a follow-up on the story of the Baby Gauge at Ryan, he wrote:

April 4, 1937. Over at Ryan, as I related herein a few weeks back, a "baby gauge" railroad runs from the Death Valley View Hotel, formerly the principal works of the Pacific Coast Borax Co., to and through the mines from which the ore was drawn. The little train, consisting of two open cars, is pulled by a gasoline motor and engineered by Bob Gardner, who used to work in the mines in their heyday. Three times a day, Bob sets out with a load of tourists at a dollar a head and regales them with facts and fancies en route, particularly when he pauses on the brink of a cliff, about the borax industry. I told Bob, who began life in the County Antrim, that if he had stayed in the old country he would probably have wound up as a jarvey, for all he needed was a whip with which to point out the scenery and the picture would be complete, for he unquestionably has the blarney. Which pleases the women, and, because it satisfies them, makes not their male escorts unhappy either.

"Here's a tunnel 1,800 feet long. Now please don't stand up while we are going through. The company has some fine eight by eights under the roof and doesn't want them injured. Now, on the other side we'll come into a green and fertile country, birds singing, cows feeding, water falling, and so on." The other side is even more barren than the entrance, naught but lava and weirdly-hued borax outcroppings, no verdure save a few scattered greasewoods. "Could I have some desert holly?" asks a lady. "Well, no, ma'am, it's against the rules to pick it, but I can never refuse a lady." And so the holly is picked from the canyon's brink.

He leads the passengers to a shaft opening into the tunnel from another opening 200 feet below. "What's this?" Bob answers indirectly. "Feel that warm air. The old boy has a good fire on today." "What is it?" "Oh," as if suddenly recollecting himself, "Oh, that's where we heat the water for Furnace Creek in the winter time." And thus it goes. Up there is the scaffolding from which the villain leaped in *Murder in Paradise Valley*; down there is

where he searched fruitlessly for an hour trying to find sun-bleached, lilac-colored bottles for Sally Blane when she was a passenger.

Every turn has a story, and many others he never tells unless questioned, for he lived long in these drifts and glory-holes. He takes particular joy in explaining the "widow-maker," the compressed-air drill with which each miner drilled the holes for his charge. A series of holes large enough for a charge was all each man had to do each day, and hence he lost no time in setting up the drill, even being willing to bear the incessant hammer of the return blow on his chest and shoulder without taking the precaution of securing a firm foundation for the machine in order to finish more quickly. It was this terrific vibration that wrecked many of the hasty ones, hence the name "widow-maker." One of the mines is called the "Widow." I asked Bob why. "Well, they say they found a lot of black widows there, but no one ever saw one of those spiders until three years ago."

Father Crowley loved the stories of Death Valley and was fortunate one day to meet with two descendants of survivors of the Death Valley Forty-niners:

> *April 24, 1938.* When Manly climbed out of Death Valley with Rogers in December, 1849, on his heroic trek for help, he left behind him at the waterhole "11 grown people in all, besides a Mr. Wade, his wife, and three children, who did not mingle with our party, but usually camped a little distance off, followed our trail, and seemed to shun company." When the two returned from San Fernando Mission they saw four wagons, instead of seven. All but the Bennetts and the Arcanes had harnessed their oxen and driven on south, saying of Manly and Rogers that, "if those boys ever get out of this cussed hole, they are damned fools if they ever come back to help anybody." In the rest of his book, *Death Valley in '49*, Manly gives no hint as to the fate of those who thus struck out along the valley floor. It was only a year ago that Carl Wheat turned up in the Huntington Library a magazine article of the late '90s that related the escape of this group by way of the Mojave river into San Bernardino. This was the first inkling of the party's fate that government and private historians had found since the creation of the Death Valley National Monument set men to work on its story.
>
> It began by a chance remark by two women guests at Furnace Creek Inn in the Easter holidays that led Inyokel to seek an introduction. The women were Mrs. John Quincy White of Ukiah and her sister, Mrs. J.A. Hunter of Santa Clara. They were two of the daughters of Almira Wade, the nine-year old girl who had seen Manly climb up the slopes of the Panamints in 1849. This was the first visit of these children of a '49er to the spot in which their mother had suffered and well nigh died. Nearly 90 years had elapsed, and, as they rested amid the luxurious cushions of the lobby of the Inn after

partaking of the excellent cuisine and recalled their mother's memories, the air was heavy with drama. "Salt water and saltpeter," she had constantly referred to, and "a tablespoon of flour a day for each of us." The tears ran freely down Mrs. White's face as she told how one night, after the party had made a dry camp, the cattle, stampeded back to the spring where they had spent the preceding evening. Mr. Wade was forced to follow them in the dark and thus traverse the distance twice. At dawn his wife, alone with the children, watched a crow circling and finally descending behind a small rise a quarter of a mile away. She hoped this to be a sign of water, and investigation showed the presence of a potable spring. For once a woman's instincts had proved truer than those of the animals, hitherto held almost infallible.

The Wades settled in the Santa Clara Valley, where Almira married one Ortley, himself the son of a '49er. Ortley started a stage line from Alviso to Gilroy and the south, and hauled mercury from the mine at Almaden to the bay shore. In those days lots in San Francisco and Alviso were worth about the same, and Ortley, conscious of the demand for mercury in the newly discovered mines, thought Alviso would soon outstrip the city by the Golden Gate. So in Alviso the Ortleys were born and reared, and there an old gentleman "with a magnificent white beard" used to drive over from Santa Clara in a phaeton to discuss old times with the Widow Ortley. The patriarch was William Manly, who had found once more the little maid who had said goodbye in Death Valley. Mrs. White says that he was working on his book in that period and that her mother helped him a great deal in arranging the material confirming his record of happenings, dates etc. Mrs. Ortley was much concerned for the old man's welfare on these journeys, fearful that he would not get home by dark, and she had a bit of a time on many occasions getting rid of him. He had evidently reached the reminiscent age. Too, he apparently did not think this member of the Wade family "seemed to shun company." His wife had little sympathy for his recollections, and there may have been more than historical sympathy drawing the ancient hero to the home of his sister pioneer. In fact, the girls used to twit the widow about her "boy friend" from Santa Clara. Yet in his book Manly makes no mention of the Wades beyond that day in '49.

When I left these living links with California's inspiring past, they were being cross-examined by Dr.Palmer of the U.S. Biological Survey, a deep student of Death Valley lore. The doctor had arrived from Washington the preceding evening, and like Inyokel, had gotten wind of a story and was making the most of it. He is the possessor of a map of Manly's journey to San Fernando, drawn by Manly himself. This distinguished historian accompanied the Funston party through this region 47 years ago. Some day I shall tell you more about him and of Mrs. White and Mrs.Hunter. Before then I shall have seen the Bible and the dictionary their mother brought with her across the desert, and I shall have talked with Panamint George,

the Indian whose father saw Mrs. Wade and her children drive through the Red man's domain.

As I was making my farewells to the women that night at Furnace Creek Inn, some guest rang. Bruce Padgett, the clerk, on the house phone and asked whether the water in the bathroom was safe to drink. As he reassured her that it was pure spring water from Furnace Creek I looked at the tear-stains on Mrs. White's face–"alkali, salt water, and saltpeter!" Almira Wade, William Manly, and Mrs. Bennett had no obliging hotel clerk to set them at ease about the water. The Inn had not been opened. As Johnny Mills told the women from Vermont, "the paint wasn't dry."

He recounted the other story:

October 24, 1937. Down at San Bernardino, in a weathered high-ceiled house, lives a little old lady. Her porch looks out on a concrete-flagged path, flanked with great prickly-pear trees, greener than the faded grass. The place shows the lack of a man's hand and the years of the gray-headed widow who moved here 47 years ago. It is the end of the street, at the desert's edge; few come to visit, none pass by the door. The smiling matriarch is Mrs. C.H. Lindner. The name might have been Smith, or Snodgrass, for all it means to Californians. Her father's name was Rolfe, which signifies little more. But her mother was Melissa Bennett, who died with her infant when this woman was a child of two. Melissa Bennett was the younger of the two children who were the first ever to cross Death Valley, and the record of Melissa's almost fatal illness from malnutrition is written into that epic of suffering and heroism by Manly, who saved the lives of his party by trudging on to San Fernando Mission and bringing back food and pack animals. It was Manly who stood by Melissa's side as she hung in an *aparejo* from the ox saddle and, looking back upon the scene of their months of torture, gave it the title which it still bears, "Goodbye, Death Valley!"

Martha, the older sister, married one Johnson, and her two sons and three daughters still live, with a score of grandchildren, in California, Oregon, and New Mexico. One boy became a captain in the Los Angeles police force, another an assistant chief in the fire department. Both are now retired on pension. Oddly, not half a dozen of the family have ever visited Death Valley although many of them plan to be present at the Mount-Whitney-Death Valley Highway dedication and to ride in the covered wagon that will carry the descendants of the Jayhawker and Manly parties. Over a paved modern highway they will re-enter the dread sink from which their forefathers beat a bloody path to civilization. Mrs. Lindner did essay the journey once, eight years ago, before the road from Baker to the valley had been oiled. Her son and daughter-in-law accompanied her, and over the corduroy trail they bounced in the dark, to be halted by a flat tire near the

journey's end. "When we rounded the turn and saw the lights of Furnace Creek Inn, I told my son that I thought it was the most welcome sight I had ever beheld in my life." I imagine it was not any more welcome than the sight of the returning Manly was to her grandmother, who fell on her knees near that same spot and cried out, "Oh thank God, thank God. The boys are back!"

The great-great-granddaughter of that grateful soul received Holy Communion last Sunday in San Bernardino. So, too, did Mrs. Lindner. Yet, Mrs. Bennett was not a Catholic. In fact, the only record of a Catholic in the group was that left by Arcane, who, according to Manly, told the Mexicans at San Fernando that he was a Catholic, and later, meeting a Mason, informed him that he was also one of the fraternity. If there are any survivors of the Arcane family, they have not made themselves known to historians interested in the Death Valley region. But the story of the coming of the faith to the daughters of Mrs. Bennett is an interesting sidelight upon Catholic education. Mrs. Bennett never recovered from the hardships of the journey across the desert and died shortly after coming to San Bernardino. Bennett, left with the two girls to care for, placed them in charge of the Sisters of Charity at their orphanage in Los Angeles. There, Melissa and Martha both embraced the Catholic religion, and from there one day a young man called Rolfe led Melissa to the rectory of the old Plaza church to be married before Bishop Mora. But, as related, the young wife died at the birth of her second child, though not before she had reminded her husband of his promise to rear their daughter a Catholic. So to the Sisters of Charity, at that time on Alameda Street, where the Kerckhoff-Cuzner lumber yard now stands, the future Mrs. Lindner went to school and from the nuns learned her catechism. The bread that the good padres at San Fernando mission gave Manly for his own nourishment, and the provisions sent by him to the mothers and little ones in Death Valley, came back after many days. The names are worn off the slabs above the friars' graves, but Mrs. Lindner and her granddaughters, Mrs. Bennett's great-great-granddaughters, went to Communion last Sunday. One sows, another waters, another reaps. God giveth the increase.

Mrs. Lindner gave the Padre a daguerreotype of her mother and aunt, and I heard the Padre tell her that he would have it reproduced for her, since these two women are enshrined in California's hall of fame, and, as he has just discovered, in the history of the Church in this state. I wondered a bit, too, if the pastor had not another motive in securing a copy of the picture. He might want to send a print to the Sisters of Charity. But I am afraid his real reason is to convince himself on occasion that, after all, something can be done with the denizens of Death Valley, even if three generations must pass before the fruits appear.

Farther east of Furnace Creek lies Death Valley Junction, a place the Padre visited on occasion:

September 1, 1935. Death Valley Junction is a bizarre melange of wasteland and material comforts, a bewildering potpourri of past and present, with a dash of future for flavor. When borax was discovered in Death Valley, and the old Lila C. mine became the main producer of that mineral, the picturesque 20-mule teams were replaced by a standard-gauge railroad from Ludlow, on the Santa Fe, to a spot in the Amargosa desert seven miles from the mine. No one thought of tourists then. Death Valley was a hell-hole that held borax and some gold and much misery. So, although the spot selected for the borax mill is today the junction for the road through Furnace Creek Wash into what is close to being the largest national park or monument in the United States, the Pacific Coast Borax Company thought so little of that future that it did not trouble to discover that the greasewood belt, which on the desert is an infallible sign of alkali-free land, stopped half a mile away for the site chosen for its shops and headquarters. So the sun-washed tourist of today, stepping off the porch of the one-time bunkhouse, now the swanky Amargosa Hotel, finds little shade, for little will grow in the sodium-soaked soil. There is water a-plenty, so strongly alkaline that you must be careful not to run it too rapidly from the faucets lest you create suds, yet even the hardy athel trees find existence difficult here. And nothing else will survive.

It is one of the tragedies of history that the famous Death Valley parties which toiled up the long draw that leads from this spot to Furnace Creek Wash suffered so terribly from hunger and thirst when, in this particular region, water is to be found in abundance at a depth of three feet. The mesquite, which seems to be the only tree that grows wild here, furnishes a bean that is tasty and nutritious for both man and beast. Twenty-five miles away, artesian wells furnish water in such abundance that an attempt to describe the resultant fecundity of the land would result in my being branded as a Californiac of the more violent type. Alfalfa seems to find its true home there, and I have seen white radishes that were as large as the largest sugar beets. When old Mr. Hayes owned the Pahrump Ranch, for it is of this I speak, he had a sign on his apple storage house, "A dollar a worm." There were no takers, for the region was, and is, pest-free. Several acres were set out as an apple tree nursery for the district. In the subsequent changes of owners, the nursery was forgotten, and the trees, planted as they were but a few feet apart, grew, nevertheless, into such a tangled mass that tunnels were cut through them to pick the fruit that continued to come in increasing quantities. Today, the Pahrump is owned by Isador Dockweiler of Los Angeles and Paul Sproule, chairman of the directors of the Southern Pacific. But the decline of the borax industry and the mines, and the advent of the railroad with the consequent disappearance of the freighters, have made Pahrump unprofitable. It is too far from market. A few years ago, the present owners decided to raise sheep there, and shipped in 1,000 head to Death

Valley Junction by train. Thence they were driven to Pahrump, but the drivers slept along the route, with the results that some 400 of the animals strayed off into the desert, never to return. Some were found 60 miles away weeks later. They did not stray any farther from their subject than has the writer, but in the desert a man is justified in going a long way for water.

When a homesteader at Kramer, near Mojave, found that the water in the well he was drilling had a peculiar taste, and expert investigation showed that he was living above a veritable sea of borax, the Pacific Borax Company moved to Kramer. There mining was cheaper, the product was purer, railroad rates were lower. Thus Death Valley Junction became a liability instead of an asset, with three or four millions tied up in a railroad and as much in a town and mill. But some meddling fellow found clay at Ash Meadows, eight miles away, that was needed by the old refineries to separate their products from the crude, and the mill at the junction proved to be just what was needed to crush the clay for shipment. Some other, and odder, individual thought that Death Valley might be of interest to somebody besides Scotty and Shorty Harris, and persuaded Uncle Sam to take it under his wing, declaring it a national monument. Thereupon the Borax Company put in green-tiled bathrooms in the old bunkhouse at the Junction and proceeded to sink close to a million in a really remarkable hostelry at Furnace Creek in the Valley of Death itself. Even the mine headquarters at Ryan have been transformed into a good inn to catch the overflow from the other two, while Furnace Creek Ranch, formerly the provider of provender for the famous mules, now serves not only as an auto camp de deluxe, but provides dates and much else for the hotel tables. So the company is coming out of the red by virtue of its commanding position in the tourist trade in the valley, from which it no longer extracts an ounce of borax. At Furnace Creek Inn, the visitor uses only soap that contains some borax product, and in a glass case are displayed many well-known brands that thus soften the water for modern America. I wonder how many of the patrons of the Inn realize that they, in turn, are making it pretty soft for the borax interests. It is one of the romances of American industry, strangely linked with the history and geography of the nation.

Death Valley Junction has ice water, electric lights, talkies, and table tennis. The Padre's pup ran off with the last remaining ball for the latter one night last week and thus stopped play until a new supply could be brought from Las Vegas, 110 miles away. Yet in Death Valley Junction a man died of a rattlesnake's bite three weeks ago. For it is still a group of houses in the midst of the Amargosa, which stretches, a shimmering gray-green, away to the horizon. You can still find a sidewinder beneath your chair, as did Mrs. Jim Rogers, the buxom old Irish pioneer who runs the railroad-tie "hotel" across the tracks. "Snake!" she shouted, and she and her son rushed about in vain over the sun-baked adobe looking for a rock to kill the

intruder. It was only after it had been dispatched with a club that she remembered she had been sitting beside a table loaded down with specimens of ore and Indian metates from all over the desert. But who would think of killing a snake with a piece of high-grade? As well use a guest towel for the family!

The story of Mrs. Rogers follows:

March 1, 1936. Mrs. Rogers has sold out to "the Borax," and is leaving Death Valley Junction forever. With her will go Jim, her affable and unobtrusive spouse. In fact, it is because of Jim that she goes. Dust did something to Jim's lungs in the old days of Goldfield, Rhyolite, and Greenwater, but Jim didn't know it until this winter, when he began to cough his life out. Silicosis? Maybe, but at any rate, Jim and the Mrs. are leaving us for softer climes and gentler breezes. Their acre, the only privately-owned land at the Junction, with its groups of cottages and main edifice of railroad ties, has passed into the hands of the corporation that Mrs. Rogers defied for many a year. Her place had been run in competition with the company's swanky Amargosa Inn, but she steadfastly refused to come to terms. Now, sickness has ended the battle of 30 years, and Death Valley is losing an institution.

Few Irish girls visited the Nevada camps in the roaring days of the late '90s and early 1900s. But it was there as a domestic that she met Jim, who, although born an American, still speaks with a Danish accent, so steeped is he in the traditions of his ancestry. The buxom lady herself has never lost a whit of her Galway intonations, and not all the scramble of mining excitement has accelerated her charming drawl a particle. She told me once of a guest who pretended he could tell by her speech what county she had come from, and averred that it was "Clare." "And what about Jim? Where would you say he came from ?" "Well, I know he's Irish, but his county puzzles me. I'm sure of you though."

When the Rogers came to the Junction, a boxcar served as the railroad station. I recall staying in her former lodging house, across from the track, in a room whose window bore the legend in gilt letters upside down. "Horatio Allen, Lawyer." It was a relic of Rhyolite, or some other ghost town of Nevada. When the Borax Company installed an electric light plant, the Rogers, of course, were not permitted to tie in. So, until a month ago, kerosene lamps lit you to bed at that quaint hostelry. For it was over a month ago that the Mrs. and himself went off to San Francisco to have some new teeth put in her and a doctor look at Jim. While they were gone, their son installed a second-hand, gasoline-powered electric plant, only to be soundly rebuked for "the improvements" upon their return with the news that they must sell out. But the plumbing still remains as it was, gaunt and lonely against the Charleston Mountain rim, doors creaking in the vagrant desert winds.

The Padre described the various hotels in the desert:

November 10, 1935. Desert hostelries deserve a Bancroft of their own. In and around them has pulsed the hottest blood of California's raw-boned days, and stories drip from the bullet holes in the creaking walls of the old American Hotel at Cerro Gordo, wraiths rise from the charred sites of the Valley View and the Istalia at Bishop. Who that ever knew her can forget "Ma" Preston, the Amazon who kept the famous Preston Hotel at Ludlow in the first two decades of the century? She feared no man–on the contrary, all men feared her. A stone's throw from the air-cooled Amargosa Inn at Death Valley Junction is Mrs. Rogers' "hotel," fashioned from railroad ties. There the traveler of modest means may still find clean sheets and cozy quarters and be lighted to his chamber by an oil lamp in the hands of the buxom landlady, whose tongue is cloyed with the accents of her native Galway.

I cannot remember the name of that enterprising inn-keeper–his "inn" was a collection of tents out at Silver Lake, a sun-baked sink in the Mojave desert–who advertised that there was running water, hot and cold, in every room. Of course, he added that the water ran through the roof when it rained, hot in summer, cold in winter. And none of his guests who had endured one of those downpours ever found cause to sue for misrepresentation.

He gave a more detailed description of the decor at some of the hotels in Death Valley:

December 5, 1937. Death Valley is surely glorifying its drinking places. And I don't mean waterholes, either, although the park service has cleaned out the ancient wells and built them up with rock ramparts and have sunk pumps until a prospector who was used to finding a dead rabbit and a few lizards in the holes would never know the old places. But I refer now to the modern cocktail lounges we once called bars. Three of these oases are spaced along the valley floor–at Stovepipe Wells, Furnace Creek Ranch, and the Inn. All of them, especially those at Stovepipe and the Inn, are well worth seeing, even by the sober-minded. The former is unique in its lighting system, miniature inverted kegs casting a soft glow over brilliant red leather-cushioned alcoves. The latter, just opened, features apses lined with iridescent colemanite or borax ore from Ryan. The main wall of the cavern, for it has been excavated from the hillside under the main dining room, are built of myriad-veined onyx from Furnace Creek Wash. One side of the chamber bears a really distinguished tempera fresco of the native mountain sheep, and the local wags have already named this "Will he make it?" because one of the bucks is leaping from one peak to another. Beneath this work of art, and flowing the length of the dispensary, is a yard-wide stream made to ripple by embossed tile on the bottom of the sluice. It is all very elegant and would, I

am sure, have been much appreciated by the beaten and famished Forty-Niners who passed this way. I can conceive too the puzzlement of some well lubricated patron who should stand by the babbling brook and gaze blearily at the vaulting bighorns beyond. "Sea horses, by gad!"

A resident of Death Valley Junction was the object of Inyokel's inquisitive mind and sharp eye:

May 14, 1939. Life is leveling off at Death Valley Junction. The mounting mercury has dried the tourist tide to a trickle; the T. and T. has returned to its tri-weekly schedule; the dining room draws its portieres for a siesta between meals; those who can begin to figure on a couple of weeks "in town"—and Joe Kovatch goes into dry dock with his locomotive. Joe is a fireman in winter, a plasterer in summer, a gun collector always. A glass case in the Amargosa Hotel lobby contains a score or so of his prize pistols and revolvers, pearl-handled and dainty, ponderous and devilish. Some of them are quadruple-barreled, with a bore like a shotgun, others are so heavy that only a Samson could use them with ease. One model weighs four and a half pounds, a rather formidable piece of machinery to whip from the hip and begin firing while a flipped coin is settling to rest. Of course that specimen, a Colt, dates from 1849, and there were men in those days.

Joe occupies a 12 by 12 bedroom in the north wing of the Amargosa, and guns grace the walls like candelabra. One whole side is covered with rifles and shotguns, including a huge buffalo gun of .70 bore. There also hangs on the halberds that Joe has fashioned into racks a rifle motivated by air, about .30 bore, apparently an inventor's model. "W. Stein, Camden, N.J.," is stamped on the barrel, but nobody today knows who Stein was. Such is the story of all these others, for Joe believes that most of the tales which gather about these old pieces are fiction and that some high-class faking has been done both by dealers and by collectors in changing the bore and the markings on guns to make them more valuable as curios. One collector has even had the name of "Jesse James" engraved on a couple of his pets. At that I wager there is many a tragedy lying behind these dueling pistols and shotguns bought from impecunious souls who parted with them regretfully, for "they had been in the family for years." I forgot to mention that Joe brought home a bride in the winter, and that they all live together in the 12-by-12 hotel room, and that Mrs. Kovatch has not indicated by any sign that she harbors the slightest jealousy of Joe's other warlike sweethearts. Instead of flower vases and other pretties, she beholds clusters of firearms on the walls. Perhaps this may be a new recipe for conjugal bliss. Why not? Why should Dan Cupid not lay aside his bow and arrow in Death Valley for a Smith and Wesson?

Inyokel commented on the summer season in Death Valley:

April 30, 1939. The scorching breath of an early summer is passing through the canyons of Death Valley and leaving withered stalks and little dried heaps which once were encelia and five-spot. The blast crosses the Panamint, golden with desert sunflower, and turns it into a valley of bleached bones of mute creation. Up the Argus it climbs, and phacelia and larkspur spring up like coins from a magician's palms. On and away up the glens of the Sierra, where snow plants explode into flame in the shadows of the firs, and paintbrush and lupine shake out their locks by streams suddenly gone mad with importance. They have so much to do, and dash off chattering. In Death Valley the inn-keepers are putting whiting on the windows against the summer suns, and furniture is shrouded for the day when princely November shall kiss it and break its slumbers.

Waitresses and the bellboys pack their trunks and hie to Yellowstone and Yosemite and Sequoia, Johnny Mills moves his chair up the hill 14 miles to Ryan and tilts it back at the same angle to watch the arena of his lifetime shimmer and dance in mirages as real as the Lost Breyfogle, which drew him here a half century ago. Jack Hopkins takes the skis from his hardware store window in Lone Pine and replaces them with rods and bait-boxes, and the town of Bishop closes its Main street for a fly-casting contest on Rainbow Day. May in Inyo brings death to Death Valley, life to the Sierra slopes. Somewhere within sight of my cabin door it is forever spring. Lord, it is good for us to be here!

While the past season at Death Valley threatened to bring less tourists than in the past, records at this writing show that as a matter of fact more people visited the bottom of the United States this year than ever before. Trade at the Furnace Creek Inn fell off a bit, as it did at similar resorts throughout the nation. Citizens in that spending class are not spending, or they are going to more moderate-priced hotels and camps. The Furnace Creek Ranch and Stovepipe Wells and Death Valley View Hotel, as well as the Amargosa up at the Junction, all wear smiles. They had the largest New Year's and Easter weekend crowds in their existence. So great was the jam at Stovepipe Wells that Manager Bennett could only suggest to late-comers that they sleep in the sand dunes, which most of them did. This did not suit two acrid spinsters of Townsendite timber–sex, female, who demanded something better. Bennett said all he could do would be to put a couple of mattresses on the barroom floor. Would they sleep there? "What? We have never slept on a barroom floor in our life!" But there they slept, and when asked about their slumbers, said that there was a devil in every bottle! Material for a column called "A Night With the Evil Spirits," or "The Face on the Barroom Floor." And up at Furnace Creek Inn they rented the room used as a clinic by Dr. Shrum to a man and his wife who had no other

accommodations. Said the gentleman to Bellhop Don Colley as they paused by the "Hospital!" sign to open the door, "This is a hell of a place to park a couple of Christian Scientists!"

Farther west at Panamint Springs, the summer had its impact:

August 28, 1938. Things are not quite so bad at Panamint Springs. A thousand or 1,500 feet more elevation is some help. Also, this new wayside caravanserai is not closed–at least not completely. You can still find rest and a sandwich, and a dash of ice cream or pop. But Wallace Campbell, erstwhile prospector and poet-laureate for Darwin, who is running the show for Bill Reid in the dog days, will draw the line at a filet mignon. After all, one cannot expect a chap who becomes a chef merely by slipping a white jacket over his brown pelt when he hears a car to dash off hors d'oeuvres and quail on toast if you are the first human being he has seen in a triduum. Wally is of the generation which knew Panamint when it was a man's country with neither road nor hospice to mark the great barren brown bowl that sags like a huge canvas anchored in every goblet canyon by a rope of sand. It is not new for Wally to watch for the chuckawalla that slides out from the cracked rock by the gas pump, nor to feed the lost wader that found its way into the kitchen and pecks at bread crumbs in lieu of sand fleas. But it is new for Wally to dwell, as he puts it, in a palace, and to know that the whir of a refrigerator beats the rattle of a canteen all hollow. One hundred and twenty by the thermometer is entirely bearable, says Wally, when you sip your coke and know that Mrs. Reid will be down today with another pie. Now in the old days…

Yes, the old days! It must have been along here somewhere, Wally mused, that they found old Jerry Fitzgerald. That was back in the late '90s or early in 1900. Fitz was a little Irishman who had built himself a cabin down in Darwin wash, that 12-mile twisting watercourse leading from Darwin clear to Panamint Valley.

There is water under the wash all the way, and about three miles from its upper end the underground stream bursts forth, dashes over a rocky bed in a narrow defile for a mile or so, tumbling at last down Darwin Falls amid fern and cactus in wild anomaly. Another half mile and the stream disappears in the sand, but the broad sweep of the wash continues on. Fitzgerald had planted celery and other vegetables in his little garden patch, hemmed in by 1,000-foot walls of gnarled conglomerate. He even had visions of orange trees down in that warm canyon, as soon as he could sell his two silver claims, the Virgin Gash and the Katy P., high on Zinc Hill. But one day, after his familiar figure had vanished over Lane Hill, homeward bound with his burros from Darwin, there came a spout. Through the gully before Mickey Summers' shack the water from the cloudburst roared two feet deep, Wally

recalls. When the torrent had subsided a party set out for Fitzgerald's cabin, for they knew that a cloudburst in Darwin Wash meant peril to all along its floor. They found but half of the old man's dwelling, the rest had gone down with the ten-foot flood that had swept all before it. From the signs they knew that old Fitz had gone down fighting, trying to divert the waters from his door. They found his body five miles away on the floor of Panamint. He had followed his lares and penates and burros and celery over the falls. To this day the visitor to this oasis is amazed to find both banks of the stream below the plunging cascade lined with what he takes to be wild celery. It is Jerry Fitzgerald's monument.

Somewhere about here, too, Wally thinks, lie his father's bones. One afternoon in May, 1924, Simon Campbell did not meet his son at the close of his assessment work on Kerby's property. Wally had been in the habit of driving his 74-year-old parent home each day at 4. It had been at noon when he had last been seen. Next morning, 100 men set out to seek Simon Campbell, but beyond where the trail to Panamint and Darwin forked they never found even his footprints. Mrs. Campbell sickened with grief, Wally roamed the vast lava flows and the deep gashes in the hills. But to this hour no trace. Still Wally hopes some afternoon to stumble across a bleached skeleton to which he can give decent burial, his last filial duty. For was not Jim Torsney found, baked to a cinder after stumbling away from the Lucky Jim in a delirium? And even though two years intervened, did they not find the skeleton of George Bowler 25 miles from where he had, in mad cunning, left his car in order to mislead the searchers? By his side was the shotgun with which he had ended his wanderings. "Who knows, I may find the old man somewhere around here?" muses Wally, as he oils the motor in the ice plant down at Panamint Springs.

There are occasionally complaints at Panamint Springs, as in all hotels. This newer generation must be served. It was one of them, no doubt, who refused to put up for the night because there was no plug for an electric razor in the bathroom of his cabin.

Mention is made above of the owner of the service station at Panamint Springs, Bill Reid:

> *July 11, 1937.* Bill Reid is building a service station in Panamint Valley. If you know Panamint, you know that this is news. Bill plans air hose, water faucets, and even a kerosene-burning refrigerator in Panamint. He has filed on the flow from Whippoorwill Spring, near the mouth of Darwin Wash, and has run tunnels into the hill to enable him to draw 30 gallons an hour or such into a storage tank, which he has roofed over to prevent its all being lost by evaporation. I met Bill on Zinc Hill yesterday morning at the water barrel, where I was waiting for my flivver's radiator to stop simmering so

that I might refill it. The temperature was 110 degrees then, and we were 4,000 feet up. "She's going to be a bit warm today," was his parting word as he wove around the bend, bound to start the construction of the concrete island on the valley floor–a concrete island in Panamint so that the cars will not bump into his service station.

Bill can look from his porte cochere–imagine a porte cochere in the flat and illimitable waste where there stands neither tree nor post nor any mark of human till you come to Hungry Bill's corral 40 miles down Trona way, and when there is no business at hand Bill can do a mighty good job of looking. To the north he can see only the long striated slopes that rise to Lee's Flat and Jackass Spring, with not even a sentinel Joshua upon the skyline. Away to the east he can trace the state highway, a black gash across the valley floor, intersecting the tawny adobe of Panamint Sink and slipping out of view behind the shoulder of a a goblet canyon. Over to the south and the nearest neighbor floats the lavender film that hides cruel cliffs and gaunt canyon, the diaphanous veil that has lured adventurers to heartbreak and death. Behind, to the west, the water-gashed canyon of Darwin Wash conceals the old road that clambers over Zinc Hill by scanty hand and toeholds, and also the terminus of the new highway which will make Bill's investment worth-while. And save for a fleeting moment in the springtime, Bill will not find in the panorama from his island a trace of that restful verdure which oculists and psychiatrists tell us is so necessary a requisite for the contented life. But Bill will probably plant cactus, and from the echinocarpa and opuntiae draw enough surcease to keep him out of the madhouse. Or at least in the desert, where one cannot be too fussy about such things.

Not far from Bill's embryo oasis–indeed he is using it as a headquarters for the moment–is an old prospector's shack. It was built by a miner from Darwin whose name I cannot call to mind. He located it close enough to the spring to enable him to carry water without too much effort and close enough to the scarp of the canyon to avoid the ordinary path of the cloudburst waters that roar down here of a summer afternoon. The shack is much of a piece with other miner's cabins, but it has one distinctive feature. The windows are all from an old automobile, apparently of the early limousine era, for they slide sideways at the turn of a crank. Further, the table is a car door, outer side up, but the piece de resistance is an old "Model T" door, stripped of its trimmings, inside up, the curve of the metal serving as a natural drain to carry off the water from the washing, for this is the sink. A wooden plug fills the hole fashioned for an outlet. By the cottage door (how idyllic that sounds) is a crude chair, a section of cottonwood bole two feet through, with a portion sawed away to leave a back. You wonder how the tree reached this denuded plain, the answer lies in the detritus-strewn wash before you. The roaring waters brought it here from the vicinity of Darwin Falls, five

miles distant, in one or a dozen outbursts of the skies. Furniture delivered to your door by the Grand Rapids people, as you might put it.

Yet Bill is not the first to erect a service station in Panamint. In the heyday of the Modoc and the Minnietta, when there was money to be made in hauling ore to San Pedro for the smelter and hay and human provender to be dragged back from Los Angeles to the isolated mines, great wagons lumbered along this dusty floor. And Nadeau, who owned them, built supply stations along the route to care for his mules, repair loose shoes, and shrink on tires slipping from sun-baked felloes. The circular bases of the forges still stand by the ruts along what we call "The Nadeau Road," like old mahales, silently scorning newer ways and newer men.

Any day now you can drive from Bill's place to Panamint Dry Lake, three miles at the most, and turn your car loose upon its water-leveled surface. There is no highway, so there are no speed limits and no curves. In the daytime, you can be guided by the valley's rim, at night if you do not follow the faint marks of previous travelers' tires you may wander for hours seeking exit. And when the sun is high you can clearly see a limpid lake ahead, its marge verdant with swaying trees, the shadows of overhanging buttes unmistakably reflected on its bosom. If another car should approach you, or pass on the state highway, its outline will appear upside down beside it in the waters below. Only there will be no waters, for this will be the mirage that you have read about, which on seeing you cannot blame those lonely travelers whose sun-addled brains convinced them that here at least was refreshment and who tore off their clothes to dive into this shimmering reservoir of coolness and relief. Pray that in the days to come such hapless souls may read Bill's placards at the edge of their mythical pool, "Two miles to Bill's Service Station. Air, Water, Pop on Ice." Some of the old-timers I have known would accept such a sign as proof positive of their dissolution, and then and there turn their burros loose, the *Nunc Dimittis* of the desert man.

Chris Wicht was a resident of Panamint.

April 19, 1936. Chris Wicht has not always lived at Panamint, lending his hospitable presence to that quiescent camp of the last century. Once, with a partner, he was engaged in mining in the Black Hills for no less a character than Hetty Green, the world's richest woman before the days of ten-cent stores. Hetty paid a visit to this particular property of hers, and showed in no uncertain fashion her dislike of the manner in which it was being worked. Nothing on the surface was right–food, accommodations, management. She decided to go below to inspect the mine itself. The easiest way down for a woman was via the ore bucket and hoist, since the ladder was a long and dangerous route. So the partner loaded their employer into the huge cauldron and lowered it about 50 feet before they brought it to a stop, still some

400 feet from the bottom of the shaft. Then ensued the following conversation: "Wimmin is no damn good, Chris." "Right, John." Whereupon they took their departure, never to return. Since history does not record Hetty's demise in an ore bucket, we are left alone with our imaginations as to her method of escape from the depths of the earth.

Chris Wicht is mentioned in another column that tells of the old mining camp days:

January 14, 1938. Our last column was borne to Lone Pine and the post office department by a motorist whom I flagged down on the Death Valley road. After securing his promise to mail it, I headed for the rendezvous with Chris Wicht and Mickey Summers in the mess hall of the Minnietta mine. Its frame structure rests on a shelf above one of the long dry washes that debouch into Panamint Valley from the Argus Range, a wash littered with boulders spewed forth by unnumbered cloudbursts. Five miles over, in Snow canyon, another prospector sat in lonely state–besides him I knew of no other human within 20 miles. So there were no eyes in the night without to return the yellow glare of the candles' orbs, flecking the Christmas tree that filled the pane. But within there were ten of us to bask in the glow of the oil stove and feast on a turkey and "fixin's," every item of which had come, like the Christmas tree, from over the hills and far away. Here Mrs. Eva Lee Gunn, who filled our plates, had spent many years while her husband operated the Minnietta–here her daughter, Helen, who filled our glasses, had played at house in the tunnels and had been schooled in the esoteric niceties of profanity by real hard-rock miners. Mickey Summers had not seen Chris Wicht for 25 years, although not 30 miles had separated them. Others in the group had never met. All of which, it is plain to see, made for a full evening, and a very Merry Christmas.

Chris Wicht still owns the old saloon in Ballarat, which brought him bread and butter and fame. For in it he dispensed both potions and epigrams, and his stories are a byword in Panamint. I have quoted him frequently herein, and on Christmas night he assured me that my reports had been substantially accurate. He asked me then if I had ever heard of the night the cloudburst caught a freighter wagon in Wildrose Canyon. When I shook my head he related how the wagon, loaded mostly with bottled beer, had stopped at Wildrose over night, preparatory to pulling on to Skidoo next day. But one of the sudden summer spouts broke loose on the slope of Telescope and a seven-foot wall of water tore down the canyon. There was barely time to get the mules up the hillside out of danger before the tawny torrent took the freighter down the wash. "Next day," went on Chris, "all the mines shut down at Skidoo. Every man in camp had gone out prospecting for beer."

In the old days of the Minnietta's production, and the operation of the

Modoc, on the bluff above, these dauntless miners built a road literally across the mountain tops towards Darwin, whence they hauled their supplies, both wet and dry. It is nearly 40 years since Chris, having purchased some necessities and a bottle of whiskey in the town, set out for the Minnietta with his burro. The day was warm, the way dreary. So, near the summit, Chris took a sup of the elixir he had procured. But the taste did not please him, and he walked off the trail some 50 feet and cached the quart behind a rock. To this day he has never gone back, and one of our speculations as we sat smoking after dinner was as to the present condition and whereabouts of one bottle that saw Prohibition come and go. Mickey opined that the spreading of this story might start a rush that would make the '49ers and Klondike look like a quilting party.

The Padre asked Chris whether, when Ballarat was in its prime, a priest had ever visited there. To our surprise, and yet not to be wondered at when one knew the man, he told us that Father Fuhr, later Monsignor, who died two years ago, had said Mass every few months there. This famous padre of the desert would arrive of an evening and say Mass in Chris' saloon the following morning. At midnight, Chris would order all to clear out because he had to get the place ready for the priest, and then he would clear a space around the pool table, which Father was to use for his altar, and arrange some stools for pews. "Then I would move over the barber chair and set it near the pool table." "What was that for?" I mused. "Damned if I know. I'm not a Catholic. But he used it somehow." "Probably for confessions," interjected the Padre, "and by the way, Mickey, isn't that the barber chair you have in your dugout at Darwin?" (Mickey acts as town barber when one of the boys is going to a dance or to the city.) "The very same," responded Mickey. Collectors of ecclesiastical furnishings please note.

The Rose Bowl, oddly enough, came in for discussion, probably because somebody turned on the battery-fed radio to get the news, and the Padre commented on the shame it was that the splendid natural arena provided by Panamint Valley could not be the scene of some annual tournament, game, or race. "Imagine, ten miles from bleacher to bleacher, and a dry lake for a race course that man could never duplicate. To be sure, the 'dobe dust would cover everything if we had a horse-track down there." "Yes," ventured Chris, "that would be one track where you could enter a dark horse and he'd never be noticed!"

I mentioned herein some time ago Bill Reid's service station and auto camp in lonely Panamint. Since then Bill has painted the roof of his establishment a bottle green, and the day after the painting five wild burros came into camp, thinking it was a spring they had hitherto overlooked.

Not far from Panamint Springs is the old mining town of Darwin. Inyokel reviewed its history for his readers:

November 10, 1935. Occasionally, even out here, I run across something that another has penned, which I cannot tell half so well, leaving me no choice but to quote. Such is the "Brief History of Darwin," printed on the back of the menu at The Outpost, one of the two coffee shops that form one-eighth of all the places of human habitation in that hamlet of vanished glories. The cafe in question stands at the junction of the town's only streets, or, more accurately, at the bend in the highway to Death Valley, for beyond that corner the streets lead nowhere. Yet the face of the menu bears the legend, "Market and Main Streets, Darwin, California," and the population of that metropolis is listed as, "Whites, 48; Indians, 19; burros, 500."

The story runs: "Darwin was founded in 1874, and in 1877 the population was 4,500, or the same as Los Angeles in the same year. Our pipeline was laid in 1875 by Patrick Reddy. There were 20 saloons on the main street, and all disputes were settled by Mr. Colt. Boot Hill is one mile west of here. Darwin has been wiped out by fire on three different occasions. Only one of the original buildings still stands. Seven miles west of here is old Fort Coso, where three times Indians massacred the Whites. Three miles away is Cold Springs, where Mexicans took out millions of dollars in gold through means of arrastras. Thirteen miles from there is King's Canyon, where thousands of pre-historic petroglyphs are to be found. You may travel over the same road Vasquez, the noted bandit, used in carrying out many of his depredations."

The sly humor in the concluding paragraph, when you recall the manner of settling disputes mentioned above, reaches its climax in the inclusion of two apparently unrelated elements in the closing sentence. "Darwin has a jail that has never housed a prisoner. We have no judge, no sheriff, nor bootleggers...Three-Fingered Jack, one of the famous California outlaws, was killed in Darwin, which is the gateway to Death Valley via Towne's Pass and Stovepipe Wells."

Darwin inspired other Sage and Tumbleweed columns:

May 19, 1935. The Rolls-Royce-wrapped tourist gliding down the slope of the Argus range into Darwin from Death Valley could never guess that this was one of the hell-roaringest towns of California's florid mining days. "Polly's Coffee Shoppe" and "The Outpost, Cactus Garden and Clean Rest Rooms," signs that flank the highway entrance, surely conjure up no scenes of two-gun men, grimy groups half-glimpsed through the smoke about the card tables beneath the swaying lamps, the clink of glasses, and the profane guffaws of Darwin in the eighties. Gone are the saloons and the hitching posts, here are the gas pumps and stool-fringed sandwich counters. The diligent searcher can locate the slag and the rusted pipes marking the site of the old smelter, and down in the dip behind the garage he can see the smoke from

Whalen's shack and peep into the cliff-dwelling where Mickey Summer's ore-roughened fingers wield the scissors in his tonsorial parlor, which is also his bedroom, kitchen, and bath. Up on the hill the wind whistles through the idle gallows-frames, and the rattlers sun themselves at the mouths of a hundred tunnels. That Darwin's sun has set I dare not say, for mines are fickle things, and Jack Stewart opines that his property over in Telescope Canyon is the "finest in the district, perhaps in the United States and, who knows? maybe in the world." But the proposed routing of the Death Valley-Lone Pine state highway through Lee's Flat, eight miles from the little settlement, will cast a cloud over the forlorn cluster of brave souls who now draw meager sustenance from the sightseers.

There are but a handful of the old hard-rock men left there now. Mickey Summers made history once when he sold his mine for $10,000–or was it $25,000?–and set out for the East. Unlike Death Valley Scotty, Mickey did not engage a special train, but he must have cut quite a swath, regardless. He returned to us in a few months, as flat as a dry lake. "I have some friends back there that really know how to drink," was Mickey's boast. Jack Stewart can furnish writers of desert tales with material in the rough, or surfaced on all four sides, according to the patron's taste and liberality. One certainly can embellish more yarns with a quart of ambrosia than with a noggin. Of Jack can be said what he remarked of his car last week when it had slipped its moorings and rolled, riderless, down the hill, demolishing one of "The Outpost" hoardings, winding up against the side of a residence–"That car is always roaming over these damn hills."

It was in the eighties that a Darwin miner, whom I shall call Goodwin because that was not his name, hit upon a novel excuse for a spree. He stamped into the Black Metal Saloon one night and solemnly announced to the patrons, "Boys, I've been bitten by a tarantula and I've come to spend my last hours with you all. Come on up, everybody, and drink to my last journey." The whole town joined in the pre-mortem celebration, which lasted all evening. Whereas sympathy and eulogies are offered but once, as a rule, by those present at a funeral or wake, John Goodwin had the pleasure of hearing again and again from cronies with wet eyes and dry throats how grieved they were at this approaching demise, and drowning his regrets with theirs. Whether he had ever been bitten, or whether the huge quantities of "tarantula juice" that he absorbed in the course of his obsequies supplied the necessary antitoxin, Goodwin lived to end his days in a less spectacular fashion.

A buxom Irishwoman, named Mary O'Neill found it profitable to keep a few hens and chickens in those boom days. Feed was scarce, but the price of eggs and the small fortune represented by an eligible fowl justified the venture. Others, too, had engaged in this lucrative side-line, when an epidemic of chicken-stealing spread through the community. Then Miss O'Neill, in

addition to locking up her precious birds at night, kept her ear cocked for sounds that might betoken prowlers. While not themselves the thieves who were raiding the town's coop, one Tom Gunn and his partner, Martin Mee, thought that under cover of the general excitement they could purloin a meal or two from the sacred precincts of the O'Neill. Martin agreed to watch outside and signal any approaching danger by whistling. Tom would gain entrance to the fowls' abode. He had just succeeded in doing so, and was trying to fasten a few of the feathered bipeds together when he heard the heavy footsteps of Miss O'Neill. The growing light indicated that she carried a lantern. The ingenious and gallant Gunn–or should be we say son of a Gunn?–hid behind the door, and as the elephantine proprietress came into view, grabbed her about the waist and kissed her. In her emotion she dropped the lantern and Tom beat a retreat, unrecognized, but swearing softly that he would shoot one Martin Mee on sight for his treachery.

It may have been at John Goodwin's premature Requiem that Spud Murphy got so tight that he lost interest in his environment and slumped into oblivion. At any rate, slump he did on one occasion, and his considerate companions of the cup stretched him out on a billiard table and draped a sheet over his inert form. Four candles at the table corners completed the setting, and for long hours the "mourners" filed by to pay their respects to, and drink to the virtues of Spud. Fortunately for the participants, the place was empty when the corpse awoke and promptly went gunning for the undertakers.

The Minnietta mine is over the range from Darwin, on the Panamint slope, but Darwin was the nearest town in its heyday. At that mine Helen Gunn grew up to be the idol of the miners, for she was the only child in the camp. She tells me that they spoiled her with kindness, and further, that she soon picked up a most unusual vocabulary for a girl of her years, one rich in the unparalleled expletives and picturesque characterizations of men living at civilization's edge. She even hints that some of her choicest bon mots were the product of Joe Olivas's fertile brain, for she was Joe's special pet. From this environment her mother sent her to the Ursuline convent at Santa Rosa, delegating to the nuns the job of undoing what the miners had accomplished so well. It was not long before an occasion offered upon which the young Helen could display her lurid vocabulary, greatly to the astonishment of her companions and the petrification of the sisters. The mother superior, though, was an able psychologist, and drawing the girl aside, assured her that she both understood how she felt and how she had learned to curse so vividly. "So, my dear, when you feel one of these spells coming on again just come to me and you can tell me what you want to say, but not before the others, please." So came a day when Helen rushed up to the superior in the corridor as the nun was engaged in conversation with some of the teachers. "Mother, I must see you right away in your office. Hurry!" Together they

retired into the sanctum, where Helen proceeded to make the air blue with her pent-up feelings, garbed in language that might have made an army sergeant envious. "There, now, you feel better, don't you?" It was the beginning of her cure, and I cannot but admire the subtlety of that understanding religious, even though it might have been a wee bit selfish of her to wish to be Helen's sole audience. Which reminds me that I must ask Helen some time if she has forgotten all those epithets. Of course, I wouldn't ask her to repeat them in front of everybody. Just for me.

And yet another Darwin tale:

March 1, 1936. Add to the rides of John Gilpin and Paul Revere a jaunt that I had almost forgotten, the trip made by Frank Fitzgerald, Art Smith, and a companion, whose name is lost in legend, from Darwin to the old Modoc mine 40 years ago. Courageous souls had built a road over the Argus mountains to the Modoc, a road that literally sat on the ridge tops and bridged thousand-foot-deep canyons with masonry that is as enduring as Gibraltar. Over this 20-mile death trap, these three men drove a wagon loaded with dynamite one dark and starless night, arriving safely at the mine before dawn. No small feat, but it takes its place with the great treks of history when we learn that all three passengers were so thoroughly soused they did not know they had lost a rear wheel off the vehicle as they left Darwin, and had gone gaily on without it.

Close to Darwin was the surprisingly green refuge of Darwin Falls, a favorite stopping place for the Padre on his way to Death Valley:

July 26, 1936. Out on Death Valley road, two miles from that hell-hole called Panamint, a waterfall operates 24 hours a day, 12 months of the year. It is known as Darwin Falls, after the little mining settlement ten miles up the hill.

Many visitors to the desert have never seen this fall, because it is off the beaten path, and its existence in such a spot is a strain on one's credulity. For the clear cold stream that pitches over the granite cliff in an arrow of foam takes its rise from the barren sands of the wash a few hundred feet above, and as mysteriously vanishes a hundred yards below. All around stretch the inhospitable and tortured canyon walls; away to the valley leads the cactus-strewn wash that tells of thirst and suffering and death. Yet, I described here, 20 desert leagues from his native Sierra, an ouzel spiraling upward through the spray. The wild celery that lines the stream in the gorge I could explain. Back in the '60s, a couple of miners had raised celery in the waters of the wash above, and, when they moved to a better land, the seeds were carried down by the current. But the ouzel, how came he here?

Perhaps he was thinking the same thoughts about me.

Darwin Falls have never been utilized for mining purposes, probably because no property of value was ever discovered at a point near enough to justify a diversion of the not inconsiderable stream. For water is worth its weight in gold in Panamint and Death Valleys, and literally hundreds of miles of pipe have been laid from hidden springs in high canyons to camps far below. In some instances, pipe lines have led up hill and down dale for several leagues, as when the inhabitants of Skidoo sent their iron lifeline into the shoulder of Telescope Peak, or Darwin reached across the burning sands to draw her drinking water from the shadow of Coso. Today, the rusting length of pipe in lonely gulches tell of years of toil that tried the best of men, and, to the initiate, of hours of vigil and oft of bloody battle. For not only in the cattle lands have the waterholes been the scenes of gunplay. Mr. Colt has settled many a controversy about the proper number of miner's inches to be allotted to each of the disputants in this man's country, too. What matter if some firewater and blood were mixed in; such was the way of the West. What tales those iron lips could tell, as they drip moisture into a barrel or sump, of the days of old, the days of gold!

A few more words on Panamint and Darwin:

February 11, 1940. If I were a radio script writer or a penner of "short shorts" for the weeklies, I would buy me a high wheeled jalopy and drive up every canyon in the Sierra, the Panamints, and a hundred other Western ranges. Then at night, by a greasewood blaze in the lee of a water-worn cliff, or in the amber glow of a prospector's kerosene lamp, I would count the day's bag. Never would I want for grist for the printer's mill, for these lonely defiles truly hold "sermons in stones, books in the running brooks, and good in everything." If no human footfall echoes from the overhanging walls, there will be an abandoned tunnel, a vestige of a shack, a petroglyph or a kit fox. If no rusting shovel records the works of man, the striated mountain face will mark the moving finger of God. Come all ye tillers of the typewriter who look off in vain for a harvest on the white plain of curling paper–come to the silent streets of the mountains for your drama. In this abode of peace you can pluck throbbing tales, literally, from the canyon's mouth.

Take Darwin Falls, for example, that freak of nature in the heart of the desert which local admirers are endeavoring to have incorporated in the state park system. That its name should immortalize Dr. Darwin French and the party he organized in 1860 to come here in search of the Lost Gunsight mine is not extraordinary. It is worth writing, though, that one of the additional attractions of the area is the inscription of two members of that party, Bailey and Hitchens, upon the wall of the wash. The Gunsight was never found, but its seekers may help to bring tourist wealth to Darwin,

a town they never knew. Their names and the date of their encampment are scratched on a ledge safely above the waterline of the cloudburst that took old Fitzgerald and his celery garden down into Panamint Valley one sultry summer's night. The celery still grows rank below the falls, but successivė belches from heavy August skies have spread our rough monument above the gardening miner, if not old Fitz himself, over ten thousand acres.

Fitz must have passed Harry Floyd's cabin on the way down. Whether he knew it or not, he could not help floating by the quadrangle of loose unplastered black rocks that served as a tent base for that odd English remittance man who came to the desert, after the turn of the century, to die of tuberculosis. He scorned a bed, slept in his blanket on the sand, lived on his remittance and the few vegetables he raised at the water's edge between cloudbursts. He hiked over crag and basin in sun and rain, photographed the torn banks of the wash and the timeless faces of the Indians, married a wife who objected not to his uncut hair and his filthy attire, and who lived, as he did, beneath the stars. In 1915 Floyd was strong enough to return to England to do his bit, "as a trailer," he said, and was last heard of when he brought back his wife's body after the war for internment in her native soil. His garden is gone, but the black walls of his hut still cling to the slope, decked with fragments of a buckboard, a necklace of lavender bottle fragments, and a lavalliere of tin cans.

Fitz sailed by Livingston's place too that night. Livingston, you may recall, was the original gentleman who piped the thin stream from Whippoorwill Spring, near the mouth of the wash, to the cottage he had trimmed with auto doors and windows. He had sliding glass from some limousine to frame the slopes of the Argus, a sink that had once been the door of a sedan, and a hanging bed that would hold him, for a little, above any rising tide. But he became entangled with the California Labor Commission over a matter of wages for an erstwhile partner in his talc mine, and vanished from his castle of Fordor-on-the-Wash. Whippoorwill has been rechristened Panamint Springs, and its historic waters go into ice-cubes for stool-perchers at Bill Reid's resort, or cool the fevered brows of gasoline greyhounds.

I should not forget the sandy bench at the fork of the Falls road and the Zinc Hill grade, where three years ago cactus stood in martial array. It had been planted by a chap who dreamed that passersby would purchase a bristling cotton-top for a bill-file or a cholla for mother-in-law's birthday. This enterprising merchant had been a fingerprint expert before tangling with the Opuntia, but neither of his talents availed him when the girl he had left behind him in the East discovered his hideout and tried to collect her alimony. He left us, and naught but memory remains of the thorny path he trod.

Beyond, where the torrents of the centuries have spewed their tawny freight across the valley floor, mountainous sand dunes show, like a windsock, where summer trade winds swoop up to Joshua-peopled heights from

the baking adobe below. Above the sand dunes lies a little spring, and towards this isolated oasis little Charlie Walker was bound when he died alone, at his camp by the dunes one day in 1932. It was the prohibition era, and Charlie was headed for the spring to set up a still for the brewing of bottled cheer. Darwin men will tell you that his silent partner was one Weir, a Scotchman, who spent an uneasy week or two after they had brought little Charlie home, but who at last, like so many other canyon dwellers, into whose fastnesses the accusing finger has pointed, went over the hill. But Charlie Walker had died possessed of a bearskin overcoat, a massive garment with a lot of warmth which Mickey Summers figured Charlie didn't need where he had gone. So during the long Darwin winters Mickey hibernates in Charlie's bearskin and dreams of 25-cent lead, half-pound nuggets, and–for all I know–of the still, oft in the stilly night.

His interest in Death Valley extended to being a booster for its preservation–an early conservationist, perhaps:

> *May 3, 1936.* The new boundaries proposed for the Death Valley National Monument would add several hundred square miles to that area for five apparently unrelated reasons. All the Panamint Mountains above the 7,000-foot level are to be included in order to provide protection for the mountain sheep, which graze above that elevation, and to secure a summer home for the monument staff members and their families, since the valley temperatures of 136 and thereabouts are not conducive to happy homes for humans. A third reason for extending the borders is the keeping of connecting roads within the reservation limits, such as the Dante's View highway and a round-trip connection through Titus Canyon. The latter was made desirable because of the research work of the young Park naturalist, Don Curry, who has unearthed in that locality the fossils that indicate that the geological history of the valley will have to be, and in fact is now being, entirely rewritten. Saratoga Springs would be placed within the boundaries because the springs offer the only resting place in many hundreds of miles for migratory wild fowl, and because of a present threat to drain them for the gold believed to be contained in the sediment at the bottom of the little lakes and to divert the water into artificial ponds that would be leased to a gun club. Finally a separate reservation would be created for Darwin Falls, that wonder of the Mojave desert, where a limpid stream, rising from a sandy wash, leaps over a 100-foot wall and vanishes into the sands a half mile below. This special reserve would be connected with the monument by a spur from the state highway two miles away. I wonder whether the traveling public will appreciate the foresight of the men who have thus planned to preserve the flora and fauna and the unique phenomena of this western waste?

Stories of Death Valley would not be complete without further mention of Death Valley Scotty. The Padre recounted several incidents in the colorful prospector's life:

September 8, 1935. We walked past the sign that read, "The Castle is closed, Scotty," through the reinforced concrete archway, with its rusted tie-wires dangling like the roots of an overturned tree, and its great gates, iron-thewed, shutting out the purple distances from the son of the open, Death Valley Scotty. Against the gaunt hill, scarred by the concrete posts of the state's line-fence, rose the clock tower, and the clock was running. A Spanish tower, perhaps Moorish, ended abruptly in the same wire papillae. The whole scene was unfinished, outlandish. Off to the right, the drive led to the castle around a group of willows filled with chattering quail. More of Spain: A patio, a balcony, a bridge swinging above the vines. Below was a great concrete-lined moat, with plate-glass windows set below the surface. Evidently an incomplete swimming pool, with facilities for watching water sports from a submarine grandstand. And everywhere gates and hand-hammered, iron-bound doors. From one of them a broad-shouldered, almost a square-figured man emerged, holding high the carcass of a rabbit, freshly killed. Beside him walked a bronzed henchman, naked to the mid-section. They spotted us simultaneously, and Scotty vanished into the interior again, his man Friday coming on to repeat for our benefit the legend at the outer portal. But I had the password, and in a moment he returned to lead us into the presence of the lord of the manor.

Men who knew this mountebank of the wasteland in his younger days aver that he was a handsome creature. There still lurks in his 60-year old, generously cushioned frame a hint of the supple power that was his. The dead rabbit attested that his shooting eye has lost none of its cunning. He can still denude a sagebrush with rifle bullets from a mile away. But his gait is degenerating into a waddle, and it is hard to reconcile him with the swash-buckling cowboy who raced across America in his famous special train a score of years ago. He somehow reminds me of a spent skyrocket. He has the old flair for headlines, but is hard put to it to make the front page again. Close up on the stories of his fabulously rich mine came the special train. The publicity thus aroused had not died before he and his "partner," A.M. Johnson, a millionaire Chicago insurance man, erected the castle in Grapevine Canyon, at the upper end of the valley, with which his name is as steadfastly linked as those of the Forty-niners. Millions–Scotty says "Two million, three hundred and forty thousand," but that was the quotation for that day only–were sunk in this wild enterprise before the depression cut off Scotty's bullion at the source, for Scotty's mines have always been east of the Rockies. When Johnson's insurance company went aground, construction ceased on the castle. "I have $600,000 in the poke yet, but there has

been so much foolin' around about the title to this place that I just decided to shut up the place and keep everybody out. Too many Napoleons. Of course, maybe I ballyhooed too much anyway."

The reference to the Napoleons and the title was to the tangle resulting from Scotty's and Johnson's not having perfected title to their land before the creation of the Death Valley National Monument, and the present attempt to remedy this by a special act of Congress. It is probable that the notoriety Scotty gave to this region was in large part responsible for its being set aside as a playground for the nation, yet this very notoriety imperils the ownership of his home. Hence his remark about "ballyhoo."

Scotty had other "mines" before he met Johnson. One was our famous wartime ambassador to Germany, James W. Gerard. Johnson met Scotty in Chicago after physicians had told Johnson he could not live six months. "Come on out with me. I'll cure you," shouted Scotty. Johnson came, Death Valley cured him, and in gratitude, he has supplied Scotty with funds for all his fun ever since. It is only fair to say that Johnson enjoys the outlandish tales of Scotty as much as anybody who hears them for the first time. But Johnson has listened to them for 25 years! When it is further remembered that this Chicago insurance tycoon is, with his wife, intensely religious, and Scotty claims not to believe in God, man, or devil, the wonder of this strange partnership grows. It was the Johnsons who designed the castle and furnished it with exquisite rugs from Minorca, embossed leather curtains from Spanish sheep, lamps from Russia, statues from Italy. It is Scotty who stalks through the luxurious lounge and grunts, "This junk is from Spain," or "This whingding was carved here," and "That thing over there is a piano that plays in the tower, if any of ye know how to play." A bull in a china shop! I hope that the motion picture soon to be produced of this Quixote of the desert will not fail to bring out the contrast between him and his castle. Nothing in the Arabian Nights is less worthy of belief than this shimmering palace in this naked, water-scored canyon. Death Valley was the Aladdin's lamp, Scotty the Aladdin, Johnson the jinnee that fabricated these turrets and bastions out of the furtive shadows and mirages of this eerie land.

In good days, the Johnsons kept Filipino servants, even to a butler, in the castle. The latter, at some evening function, observed that Scotty was seated at table with his hat on. Believing that it was a mere oversight, he slipped up behind the offender and whispered to him."Hell!" bellowed Scotty,"I'm not goin' to be told what to do in my own house by no Portygee!" Wash Cahill told me that he and the president of the Pacific Coast Borax Company, Mr. Jenifer, were guests of the Johnsons for dinner some years ago. Knowing Wash of old, and fearing that he might commit a faux pas, Scotty leaned over just as the party was seated and roared in his best whisper, "The old gent prays!"

Inyokel told of the railroad ties that are stored at Scotty's Castle and other interesting bits and pieces about the lord of the manor:

> *September 22, 1935.* Scotty and Johnson bought the ties when the Tonopah and Tidewater abandoned its line north of Beatty. Seventy mile of ties will feed the castle's open fireplaces for 25 years. Lest the alkaline soil corrode the pipes, all the water-supply and other connections are conducted through concrete tunnels high enough for a man to walk in, almost a mile of subway, Scotty says,"There's a vault down there, too, but they've never found it." His fertile imagination (or was it tongue?) reported an airplane spying on his movements on one of his recent trips with his mules. He came near death this summer from a rattlesnake bite. He attributes his recovery to the presence of a gallon of liquor in his car.

And in another column:

> *March 14, 1937.* Scotty continues to crash the front pages even in his misery. His wife's lawsuit has kept him in the headlines, but Scotty has the stuff that headlines are made of, and he needs no marital infelicity to get his mead of publicity. For instance he spent a very jolly evening at Stovepipe Wells Hotel a few weeks back, but refused to accept Mr. Bennett's offer of a bed for the rest of the night. Instead, he dragged out his cot from the car and slept under the stars. In the morning, he ordered five egg sandwiches for breakfast, and gave the waitress a $2 tip. He demanded that the cook be sent in, and to that worthy he gave $5. Broke or not, married or otherwise, Scotty knows the makings of a good story. That's why Inyo claims him as her own.

And then:

> *January 3, 1937.* Word reaches me that Death Valley Scotty is trying to buy a truck to haul hay into the valley for his mules. Asked what he needed the mules for, he snapped, "To haul gas for the truck!"

And yet another, regarding an encounter with a Montana cowboy, Dick Randall, known locally as The Governor:

> *December 24, 1939.* The Governor caused Scotty not a little discomfiture last winter on the occasion of one of our local Monte Cristo's visits to the camp store and lobby . Scotty made a few purchases, and then repeated one of his favorite publicity-winning gestures. Digging into his pocket he extracted a roll of bills. The outer one read "$1,000." Many here think it is the same thousand-dollar bill he keeps for the purpose, but that is neither here nor

there. The astonished clerk chattered, "I'm afraid I can't change that." Which is what Scotty expected. But he had overlooked Dick Randall. "Here, give me that. I have the change here," he smiled obligingly, fumbling in his trousers pocket. "In Montana we always carry around a few grand." But he never had a chance to produce the 69 cents which was the actual contents of his treasury at the moment. Scotty had swiftly replaced the big bill and had "found" the exact change somewhere.

Another story featuring Scotty portrays the wedding of his lawyer:

May 14, 1939. Fifty of the guests at the Choate-Drew nuptials in Scotty's castle stopped overnight at the Amargosa last week. Dr. Edward P. McLennan, the Presbyterian minister from Hollywood who officiated, had a lot of fun knocking on their doors in the morning and announcing that they would be charged for another day if they did not rise at once. Orders were that the guests should arrive at the castle in their wedding garments, so in all their silks and satins and Palm Beach suits the ladies and gentry drove out to Dante's View and sundry attractions before ending at the rendezvous. But this was just a foretaste of the whole bizarre business.

The bride wrote her own wedding ritual, which included, besides the usual "I will's," some reference to a troth as binding as that on Mt. Athos or Ossa, or Pelion. Somewhere in Greece, my informant reports. Carrie Jacobs Bond recited a long poem about love in the forest. Scotty wore a coat for the first time within the memory of the oldest inhabitant and served as an attendant for his lawyer bridegroom. Chief Hummingbird, true to tradition from the waist up in beads and hair-do, clad in blue trousers from the equator south, made Supt. Goodwin wait in the courtyard until Scotty identified him. Cap Buer of the highway patrol figured how much Mrs. Johnson was losing by not charging the five-score visitors the customary $1.10 admission. The Associated Press, under the direction of Superintendent Clausen, posed a kissing bee for the cameras after the ceremony. The dominie slipped a candid camera out of his vest and began snapping shots before the echoes of the vows had died out. "Doctor, lawyer, Indian chief–rich man, poor man, beggarman, thief" all report a good time in true Scotty tradition.

A visitor at the Amargosa was the inspiration for the following story:

May 14, 1939. Uncle Charlie Gower stopped over at the Amargosa last week to see nephew Harry, the superintendent, and added one more generation to the ancestry of the Gower wit. Harry has long been famous for his repartee. One of his uncle's contributions to our stock of stories is that of the death of Mrs. Joe Smith. Upon arrival at the gates of heaven she inquired of St. Peter if Joe Smith were there. The celestial janitor promptly answered

that there were at least 5,000 Joe Smiths in heaven, and that she would have to furnish him with more accurate identification. For instance, did she recall Joe's last words? "I remember that he asked me never to kiss another man. If I did he would turn over in his grave." "Oh, sure, he's here. Come in. We call him 'Revolving Joe'."

At the same location the Padre reported on a post-office cat:

May 14, 1939. Susan is doing quite well. So are her kittens. Raising a family within the confines of a general store, post office, and soda fountain, even when the establishment is as decorous as the Death Valley post office, is quite a chore. How about a stamp for Susan, Mr. Farley? You see, she really typifies something in our American life, for Postmistress Montgomery first discovered Susan's four blessed events one morning in the drop-letter box, where an observant feline mother had imitated her betters by placing her project under the aegis of Uncle Sam. Mrs. Montgomery transferred the brood to another home, and finally a place was set aside for it in the liquor warehouse. There Susan carried the kittens by the scruff of the neck until the kind-hearted postmistress asked one of the boys to help her out by carrying one over for her. But the mother, despite the fact that she found four kittens at the terminus, remembers that she had brought over but three, and caterwauled until the human onlookers were compelled to sneak back the one kitten to the post office for Susan herself to transport. Mature consideration brings me to the conviction that Susan's error in depositing her babies in the letter box was owing to the fact that all lights at the Junction are shut off at midnight. In the dark even a cat can be pardoned for mistaking "Letters" for "Litters."

Farther north, at Death Valley's Furnace Creek Inn, the Padre met a man who told of his father's mining ventures in Panamint City:

January 22, 1939. "This is my first visit to Death Valley," explained Whitney Palache of Carmel, standing with me on the terrace of the Furnace Creek Inn. "But over there somewhere," he was pointing towards Telescope Peaks' mantilla of new snow, "in one of those canyons of the Panamints, my father looked at some mining property in the '70s. I think Jacobs was the man's name, the fellow who tried to interest him. But it proved to be only a pocket, so he returned to the coast." I knew this man, R.C. Jacobs, discoverer with Stewart and Kennedy of the horn silver in Surprise Canyon that was to result in the birth of Panamint mining district, the battle between United States Senator John P. Jones and the Southern Pacific for a tidewater terminus at "Shoo Fly" or Santa Monica, and the writing of another chapter in the fortunes of Senator William M. Stewart of Nevada. Neill C. Wilson tells

the tale well in *Silver Stampede*—the intrepid may read it in the ruins of that flood-scoured canyon high on Telescope's slope, ruins of as wild a camp as ever burgeoned in a desert where unlovely excrescences push up from nowhere in a night. "No depth" might be inscribed on Panamint's tombstone, the cause of the abandonment of a score of other strikes in this stark range. Palache's father had called the turn.

"I recall my dad's telling me that on the return trip he traveled in a buckboard down a toll road." (This was undoubtedly Surprise Canyon itself, that tortuous ravine through which the first-comers had shoveled and pushed a passable path for wagons and stages.) On the way they caught up with a miner on foot, and the driver offered to let him ride in the rear. He leaped on, and away they bounced. Under the seat was a sack of potatoes, and Palache noted that when the neck of the sack fell open the loose tubers began to fly off into the sagebrush like pebbles from a slingshot, particularly when an abrupt chuckhole or rock was encountered by the conveyance. In effect the buckboard acted like an ancient Roman catapult. When they arrived at the terminus of the toll road in the valley he alighted and looked back for the other passenger, who had been singularly silent. The man had also got to his feet and was engaged in a complete tour of inspection of the vehicle, with whose construction he was evidently unfamiliar. After a second encircling he stopped and unburdened himself of the most eloquent flow of profanity that Palache had ever listened to, a selection of lurid adjectives designed to blister the paint off the diabolical contrivance which had spanked him so thoroughly on the hectic ride. Palache, remembering the potatoes, was sincerely sympathetic.

The elder Palache had come out to California in a covered wagon in '49, and had spent much of this time in the gold towns. He was at one time Adam's Express agent at Angels Camp, and several years later, driving with his son in that vicinity, he stopped and exclaimed, "At this spot I became a Republican." The boy looked about him for sign of a building or other indication of a settlement, but found nothing to indicate why or how such a change could have occurred. "What do you mean, Dad? What happened?" "Yes, it was right here. I remember well. Around that hill came a racing horseman shouting, 'Fort Sumter has fallen!' At that instant I became a Republican."

A visit by the Padre to Yosemite brought forth reminiscences of other mining ventures in the Panamint area:

> *July 14, 1935.* Trippers to Yosemite Valley are familiar with the famous firefall from Glacier Point, the cascade of embers that pours over the chasm's rim and fades into the stygian depths below. There is something eerie, too, about the stillness that falls over the valley in the mountains preceding the

measured call of the guide from Camp Curry to the listeners over half a mile above him, "Ho, Gla-a-ac-ier-r-r-r!" And when, as from a land beyond the skies, comes the answering, "Ho, Camp Cur-r-ry!" "Let the fire fall-l-l!", bellows back the Curry man, the diminuendo of "fall" suiting speech to action, for in a moment the yellow star that has been glowing on the canyon's brink spills over, a golden tassel on the robe of night. It is one of the world's marvels, as endemic to Yosemite as leis to Hawaii or bog-oak to Erin.

I got off on that tack thinking about the old Minnietta mine today. Along in the first of the '80s Jack Gunn, Art Smith, and Frank (Fitz) Fitzgerald shared the ownership of this famous old producer in the Argus range over the hill from Death Valley. Jack took it into his head that he wanted to own the whole works, and offered to buy out his partners. Art sold out promptly for $500. But Fitz, who interspersed his friendship for Jack with occasional spells of deadly enmity, refused to dispose of his holdings. At the time he was living in the Modoc, a mine he had leased from Hearst. It was located a thousand feet above the Minnietta, but the bellowing miners found this separation no obstacle to communication. They needed no telephone in that desert air. Came a day when a tunnel caved in at the Modoc, and Fitz was out of funds to carry on. He stalked to a crag above the Minnietta and shouted to Gunn that he was ready to sell. If language could shake the hills, there would have been a fair-sized temblor in Panamint that day as the negotiators emptied lungs-full of curses at each other while they drove their bargain. Fitz succeeded in getting $2,500 for his share, and he knew that Jack's roared response was as good as a cashier's check. This strange bargain was later entered in the county records, but I can never think of the gentlemanly conversation carried on in the night air of Yosemite without remembering the morning that Jack Gunn and Fitz made the welkin ring with their unalloyed descriptions of each other's virtues.

Jack Gunn's honesty was a byword in those days of unvarnished good and evil. When his brother, Tom, who had come from Canada to Tonopah to take a fortune from Mother Earth and took instead the black pneumonia that was prevalent there in 1901, passed to the land where the streets are paved with gold, Jack set out by buckboard and mule team for his brother's bedside. After 16 hours of driving he reached Keeler, the terminus of the narrow gauge. There he learned that Tom had died. The first message told only of his illness. Burial was prompt in those epidemic days, and Jack reached Tonopah after the funeral. There he was presented with bills for the services by two undertakers, each claiming to have officiated at the obsequies of his kin. Knowing that one of them was a liar, but not having the wisdom of Solomon and fearing to leave a just debt unsettled, Jack paid them both, thus furnishing an unexampled commentary on his own integrity and the outlawry of the period.

The Padre shared with his readers the biggest mining story of Death Valley–that of borax:

> *March 7, 1937.* Almost every visitor to Death Valley who has fortified him or herself with stories of the region, true or false, before coming asks two questions, "Where's Scotty?" and "Where are the Twenty Mule Teams?" Such is the power of publicity, whether availed of through spectacular special trains or borax boxes, wild tales of fabulous mines or *Death Valley Days* on the radio. And every writer on Death Valley must of necessity devote a chapter or two to Borax and Scotty, for of them is much of our modern story of Death Valley woven. A combination possible only in a bizarre land like this is that of the swashbuckling, picaresque, ex-Wild West rider and the English-owned, far-sighted borax company; the one a boaster of riches concealed in a secret cache, the other the actual owner of the world's richest cache of borax, and not saying much about it; the one frankly intolerant of these "moguls" and "Napoleons" at the south end of the valley, the other amusedly welcoming Scotty to lounge in the luxurious lobbies of its hotels and organizing parties of tourists to visit the "Arabian Night's" castle of this wasteland Monte Cristo. Death Valley, largest, but one, of all the national parks and monuments, is the big top for many sideshows and several rings keep the spectators constantly a-goggle, but these two lead all the rest.
>
> Borax, although found in the valley previously, was commercially produced in quantities only after 1880. The tale of its discovery then is worthy of a high place in the annals of adventure. Aaron Winters, and his wife, Rosie, dwelt in a lean-to on the edge of Ash Meadows, about 40 miles from the floor of Death Valley. Few more lonely and more impoverished surroundings could be imagined for human habitation, some 200 miles from a railroad. There one day a wandering prospector paused and told the couple of the borax deposits and workings in Nevada, and the alert Winters cautiously drew from him all the information he could on the nature and tests for the substance, thus learning that a combination of borax with certain chemicals would burn green. As soon as the visitor had gone, the desert dwellers lost no time in sending for some supplies of the necessary testing materials, and then traveling down to the marsh on the floor of Death Valley. There with trembling hands they crushed the "cottonballs" they had gathered, poured alcohol over them and with the stars alone for witnesses touched a match to the mixture. Up leaped the flame. "She burns green, Rosie! We're rich."
>
> Winters sold out to Coleman, a merchant already in the borax business, who later went bankrupt, for $20,000. Coleman's interests went to "Borax" Smith. Out of whose activities, and those of Thorwaldsen, grew the present Pacific Coast Borax Company. Smith made a fortune, but lost it on the construction of the Key Route trolley and ferry system in Oakland, a far cry from the arid sink in which he found his wealth. Coleman's name is em-

balmed in the name of the form of sodium borate discovered at Ryan, on the edge of the valley, the principal source of the substance for years. Besides Colemanite, the company has named Rasorite, another form, after one of its field engineers, and now Kernite, probably after the region in which the present workings are located, at Kramer, in Kern county. The Kramer deposits, so rich and so accessible that they resulted in the closing down of all the Death Valley activities of the company, although it still retains the borax claims there in self-protection, are themselves extraordinary. Some 15 years ago, a homesteader near Kramer sank a well and found a brackish taste in the water. Investigation revealed a vast underground layer of almost pure borax, a hundred feet or more in depth, many miles square, which the company was prompt to purchase.

The famed 20-mule teams, one of which again pulled its two wagons and water tank in the San Francisco Bay Bridge celebration, were the answer of J.S.W. Perry, a company superintendent, to the problem of transporting the borax from the valley to the railroad, 165 miles away over one of the worst deserts in the world. These huge wagons were built to his specifications at Mojave, 16 feet long, four wide, six deep, with tires of steel eight inches wide and an inch thick. Two of them stand today at Death Valley Junction, two more on the valley floor near Furnace Creek. Two altogether, the usual manner of travel, held a freight car load of borax, dragged across marsh and sand in tropical heat by 20 mules, or rather by two horses and 18 of the mixed breed. The driver controlled the animals by a long line to the leaders, a jerk meaning a left turn, a pull indication a veer to the right. This 120-foot rope, plus the 30-foot whiplash, was probably the original remote control. In addition, the driver had a box of pebbles on the seat for direct persuasion. When the 20-mule team was assembled again this year, the company had it travel the old route from Mojave after the San Francisco celebration, and as I beheld their entrance to Death Valley I watched in amazement the animals stepping over the chains and pulling direct right angles to the rest of the teams in order to negotiate the curves, like branches on a vine.

A later experiment of Smith's was the substitution of steam tractors for the mules, but the rusting specimen at Furnace Creek Ranch is mute witness to the failure of the scheme. Finally, the company built its own railroad from Ludlow on the Santa Fe, and from Death Valley Junction constructed a narrow gauge line to Ryan, where the mine was then located. Today the railroad runs three trains a week, two of them a mere motorcar, and the narrow gauge is no more. The Cadillac with flanged wheels on which we used to climb the hill to Ryan lies on the dump below the abandoned workings, and a sign in the Death Valley Hotel, the former mine office and boarding house, tells you that for a dollar you may ride with a party and a guide on "the baby gauge," the tiny railroad, which winds in and out of the lava cap from which you can peer into Death Valley far, far below.

There is an interesting footnote to the Borax story:

September 29, 1935. Above Gower Gulch, a hundred yards off the Furnace Creek road into Death Valley, a stone-walled parking place has been built on a promontory overlooking the saffron and ochre-hued canyon that falls away to the silver floor of the valley. The spot is called Zabriskie Point, after the former president of the Borax Company, who found wealth and fame in this corner of the desert. He was once an office boy for a freighting company in Nevada, owning, besides his clothes, a dog of uncertain lineage. Some fellow employees tied a can to the hound's tail in a dull hour, and the deed so upset Chris that he immediately resigned his "position." He would not work for a company that employed men who would treat a dog in such ill fashion. So forth into the wide world he strode, and down the street met a man who needed a swamper on the wagon he was driving toward California. Young Zabriskie climbed aboard. The man was "Borax" Smith, first to develop borax in Death Valley. An uncanny tail, or is it?

Death Valley was ever an inspiration to the Padre as he journeyed in his Ford over the dusty roads:

April 3, 1938. If you would revel in all the glories of Death Valley, come on a dull day. City dwellers think quite naturally, that an overcast sky is not a good omen for a motor trip, presaging gloom and even rain. Yet, it is only when the sun has buried itself in a mantle of cloud, or when a rare drizzle has begun to whisk the valley floor, that the incredible coloring of this saturnalia of hues can be fully envisioned. Artists can explain this, overtones or undertones or reflection or something, I know only that a grey day in Artists Canyon in Death Valley drives even the stodgy bourgeoisie mildly insane. What Arvin and Bakersfield do with the poppies and lupines and owl's head clover Death Valley does with borax and iron and manganese. I beg of you not to have the east room or the davenport done over until you have made the jaunt. After you have beheld this piece of work you will probably return home and burn your house down.

There is a story in every canyon, a novel in every league of Death Valley. The national radio broadcast of *Death Valley Days* has continued for over six years without interruption, and if occasionally this feature dwells on tales or characters remote from its title it is only because its author dwells in New York and must gather her material on a flying trip every two or three years. If she lived within the monument boundaries, Mrs. Woodman would never have to step over the line for drama. Thus she could speculate on the identity of the skeleton that N.C. Westmoreland told me about in the Ghost

Casino at Rhyolite last week. Wes says he found the gentleman's bleached framework sprawled on the gravel a few yards off the old Wingate Pass road a score of years ago. There somewhere he lies buried, and no man knows his name.

Not a month has passed since the monument naturalist and a companion wandered up a lonely canyon and found another field of prehistoric camel tracks. Death Valley already has revealed more of these than any other region, but their location must remain a secret until the Park Service is prepared to publish its report. Following their find, the rangers turned into a small box canyon and stumbled upon a prospector's camp, with his forge and table and his tent, which had collapsed and fallen over the other objects. A screw-top coffee jar held a few blocks of the old-fashioned sulphur matches. Another contained hops, perhaps for a little home brew. A new shovel was still wrapped in a Goldfield newspaper bearing a 1907 date. But the proprietor had not returned to camp since that day 31 years ago when he set out to follow the hematite streak on the left wall. Maybe it was his skeleton Westmoreland found. Or in some other lonely recess he may await Gabriel's trump, like scores of others who have vanished in the Valley of Death.

A fearful gash in the Grapevine Mountains of the Funeral Range is Titus Canyon. So steep is the ascent upon the rubble-strewn floor that is a trying task for any machine. But the monument authorities will permit only down-travel, from the Nevada side. The reason is that there is no room to pass another car, and an ascending vehicle would have to back down the entire length of the gorge to escape in case of trouble. Titus takes its name from the Titus boys, sons of a wealthy Pennsylvania family. The youths came to Rhyolite in the boom days of 1906, drawn by the lure of gold. One hot day in that year they sought to purchase a shotgun to go rabbit hunting while they examined the surrounding terrain for possible minerals. No shotgun was to be bought in Rhyolite, which had its share of other firearms. But Jack Longstreet, a notorious squaw man of the settlement, himself a descendant of the General Longstreet family, lent the lads his gun. They struck out for the Funeral range and met some Indians engaged in construction work near the head of the canyon that now bears their name. The workmen advised them not to enter the defile because of the lowering skies, which might let down a torrent of water at any moment. But the hunters went on unheeding. An hour or two later the cloudburst came. The brothers have never been found although expedition after expedition, promised a handsome reward by the relatives, searched the water-scored pass. Eastern papers broadly hinted that Rhyolite bad men had waylaid the boys for the twenty-dollar gold pieces they carried in their money-belts. It was ten years later that Joe O'Brien of Beatty, U.S. Commissioner for that part of Nevada, was conducting an investigation for a mining concern and found himself not far from Sheephole, as a tinaja in Titus Canyon is called. His wife, who, with Indian Jim Shaw and his squaw, was along, brought him a gun-stock she had found

in the wash. He paid no particular attention to it until a little later when another Indian passed that way and shouted, "That's Longstreet's gun!" Judge O'Brien and the men then began to dig at the spot where the find was made. Three feet down they unearthed a badly frayed strap and three twenty-dollar gold pieces. But no more, although later searches, again urged by the family, covered the area as thoroughly as possible. There was no doubt that the eight or ten feet of fresh detritus that the particular cloudburst which caught them had brought down had buried the luckless lads more effectively than man could ever have done. The weathered shotgun butt hangs today on Judge O'Brien's wall in Beatty, and 15 miles away Titus Canyon still beckons the unwary.

Closer to the Padre's home base was the Saline Valley, not as well known as Death Valley, but important in mining history;

April 25, 1937. Over the Inyo mountains from Lone Pine, literally behind the beyond, a great bowl bellies, its bottom glaring white, its ten-score miles of fire-baked rim lifting stark against the blue. This is Saline Valley. Saline, because the coruscant field upon which you pick your crackling path is pure sodium chloride; saline, because a foot beneath the surface the mother liquor may be found, salt as the sea. From canyons in the Inyo, where brave willows and mesquite have filched a moiety of shade from the beetling ledge, brooks tumble to the valley floor, to lose their freshness in the thirsting salt. Here, by the barren marge, ends a dream. Here terminates the cable tramway built a quarter of a century or more ago through the efforts of White Smith, who single-handed raised the funds to erect this method of transportation for the salt across the range to the shores of Owens Lake, where it could be loaded on the narrow-gauge railroad. But other men found that it was cheaper to evaporate sea water in vats by San Francisco Bay and Moss Landing, and one day the cartridge-like buckets ceased to ride over the brown humps and swing, like ants on a twig, over mile-deep canyons.

Rust rules today at the tram terminus in Saline. Rust on the rails that run beside the vats' edge; rust on the forge; rust on the wrenches laid down by the last workman; rust on the axle-bolt of the wooden fan some suffering engineer devised to agitate air above his head during a maddening August; rust on the telephone; verdi-gris on the power line and knife switches. Ten thousand suns have sucked the marrow of plank and rafter; you walk across the loading platform at your peril–and the roof of the blacksmith shop sags till the gables appear Chinese. Near the end of the broken pipe line that once brought water from the hills to fill the vats after they had been scraped dry of the residual salt lies an enamel cup, bottom up. It is eloquent of the thirst that prompted its use, eloquent of the last toiler to set it carefully down, never to be used there again. Salt, silence, and sun. Such is Saline.

A few years gone, a catch phrase ran the usual gamut of stage and radio and sidewalk comedians. Recall "Where is Elmer?" I have found Elmer. He is the watchman of the rusted pile of machinery and timber and cable at Saline, and he lives alone, save for Nancy, by the shattered pipe line 'neath the willows and mesquite. Nancy is a shaggy, nondescript canine, who is as lost as Elmer, but much more affable to a suspicious stranger. For five minutes, Elmer spoke in monosyllables, and but few of those. Only the gift of a handy copy of the *Saturday Evening Post* assured him that I was not here to load a mile of cable into my CR8, and then, in language as highly colored as some of the bottles I later discovered about the yard, he became quite voluble. No, he did not mind the heat, although last summer was a mite hot. Nor was he lonesome; in fact, some company had opened up the Bunker Hill mine 18 miles away and things were getting too noisy altogether. Yes, he found enough to do, for he went prospecting frequently. I looked speculatively at the sock pulled outside his left trouser leg, and he said, "Artificial." Thus Elmer Oaks, who lives alone, save for Nancy, hard by the fresh water pond on which ducks float in Saline, passes his days. When things get dull, he hikes, wooden leg and all, over the most inhospitable hills in creation, prospecting. One meets such interesting people.

Such was the only other human being I met that day. He was standing on a little rise by the road as I climbed out of Saline, and, as far as I could see, he had risen out of the earth. But a few feet farther and I saw his car hidden in the dip behind the hump, square in the ruts."Trouble?" "Yah, I can't get her started. Guess she got too hot." I knew him for a Czech by his accent, for a novice in autodom by his remark. For he had come down hill for ten miles in second and low gear, the only manner in which that road can be negotiated, and he spoke of overheating. Surmising that he had in some fashion drained his vacuum tank and assuring him that after he got over the rise he could coast until he got the engine functioning again, I towed him to the crest and sent him on his way. But first I observed a brand-new cradle or rocker for gold mining half-hidden beneath his duffle, and heard him ask, "What's the best place to start placer mining around here? What place is this?" I referred him to Elmer, just a few blocks down the hill, and climbed away, meditating on that sweet Providence that takes care of fools and little children.

The Death Valley escape trail was of great interest to the Padre and he wrote rather wistfully of his lost opportunity:

June 2, 1935. The mentioning of Manly reminds me that another of the ambitions of a lifetime has been ruthlessly destroyed. I had always cherished a secret hope of some day tracing Manly's route from Death Valley

to San Fernando and return on his historic journey to bring aid to the rest of the party. I thought that his description of the landmarks were sufficiently explicit to enable one to follow his course through the Panamints, the Slate range, Red Rock Canyon, and the San Gabriel Mountains. But now an engineer named Wolff of Pasadena has not only accomplished that very task but has mapped and photographed the actual spots described by the Death Valley pioneer. The famous falls are pictured, the falls–waterless, of course–over which Manly and Rogers could not lead the horses they had brought from San Fernando for the women to ride, and where they saw the bones of these poor beasts on their return journey. My hat's off to Engineer Wolff for a good piece of work, a real contribution to California's story. Still, I wish–but he probably thought of it first anyway. So I guess there is nothing left to seek but the lost Breyfogle, the Gunsight, and a half-dozen other wills-of-the wisp.

Nothing seems to have escaped Inyokel's nose for news. Although the name of the newspaper is incorrect, (it was known as the *Greenwater Miner*) the rest of the story is authentic:

> *March 1, 1936.* Down on the lawn below the Furnace Creek Inn, in the shadows of a cabbage palm, stands a printing press. It could readily be reconditioned to run again, either by hand or by motor. It is one of Johnny Mills' talking points to tourists that it stood unrusted under desert skies for 30 years after the abandonment of Greenwater before Kathryn Ronan salvaged it and brought it here for protection. On it was printed, in those hectic days, the *Greenwater Gazette*, which appeared weekly, whenever the owner and publisher was not too drunk to be conscious of the passing of time. Frequently, however, his assistant, a youth who could run the machine but knew naught of editing, would attempt to save the day by merely changing the date line and printing the previous week's issue all over again for subscribers. That this was a trifle confusing became apparent when a Greenwater citizen whose prolonged sprees occasionally left him slightly daft was hailed before the judge in Independence to explain why he had committed certain misdemeanors. "Because I'm crazy, Judge." "And to what do you attribute your insanity?" queried the court. "To readin' the *Greenwater Gazette*," was the reply.

In a postscript to the above article he offered a parody of its beginning lines to set the record straight:

> *January 8, 1939.* Down on the exotic lawn by the synthetic pools beneath the imported palms of Furnace Creek Inn a printing press stands. Its utter lack of protection from wind and sand and sun might lead a less chary scrib-

bler to expatiate on the freedom of the press. But Inyokel, who has mentioned the machine before can find little but pathos in this old relic of the long-abandoned mining camp of Greenwater. Greenwater promised in 1907 to become a second Anaconda, but the copper stains proved to be mostly on the surface, and only empty cellars, mounds of rock, and shrivelling gallow frames today give any sign of the thousands of men who there found life very much worth living for a little while. Early this winter a man registered at the Inn and left with Miss Katherine Ronan, the manager, a typewritten sheet that has endowed the press with a personality. Read in conjunction with the rare copies of the magazine that was printed on the contrivance, Editor Glasscock's comment gives us a chapter of Death Valley history written by the man who lived it.

"On this press" writes the quondam publisher, "at Greenwater, Calif., in the summer of `1907, the tenth and final issue of the *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* was printed. One week later the frame building housing the printing plant burned to the ground, without insurance, because it cost more to extinguish a fire with water at 12 1/2 cents a gallon than to let it burn. A few weeks later gradual disintegration of the camp was virtually completed by the financial panic of 1907. Then the *Chuck-Walla's* publishers followed most of Greenwater's 1,200 inhabitants out to seek new fields in which to be conquered.

"The *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* was founded, edited, and written in its entirety by C.E. Kunze and C.B. Glasscock. Kunze later, for many years, was the leading political reporter on the *San Francisco Call and Bulletin.* He died at his home in Mountain View, Calif., in 1928. One of the two complete files of the *Chuck-Walla* extant was sold to a Los Angeles collector at a price which provided a granite shaft for his grave. How he would have laughed at that! C.B. Glasscock later, for 20 years, was a writer on the *New York Telegram* and the *Chicago Tribune*. He returned to California ten years ago to write independently, and has produced nine non-fiction books, mostly milled from the ore of Western achievement.

"The press originally was part of the job printing equipment of the *Greenwater Miner*, established by Major General J.F.A. Strong, later governor general of Alaska. It was purchased from Strong by Kunze and Glasscock out of profits accumulated in the first few months of the *Chuck-Walla's* skyrocketing career. In that period it attained a mail circulation of 4,000 copies, extending into every state in the Union, and increased its owners' initial capital of $35.35 to tangible cash assets of $10,000. The latter assets vanished so rapidly in the fire and subsequent collapse of the camp that ten months after their arrival the youthful publishers departed with less than their original cash capital. But, man! They had fun! And this one of the *Chuck-Walla* publishers has just made his first trip to Greenwater after an absence of 31 years. Poor Greenwater."

Glasscock left a copy of the *Chuck-Walla* with "Doc" Farland Wells up at the Amargosa Inn at the Junction, also adding this note: "You probably will note a good many errors and more gaucheries, but the little mag, I believe, was a fairly accurate reflection of the mining and promotion spirit of its time, and may be of interest for that reason rather than for any other. As I recall we did not have even a dictionary, and certainly not any adequate map of the region. We were even under the distinct impression that Greenwater was in the Funeral Mountains. I was quite astonished and disappointed many years later to learn that it was in the Black Mountains. Anyway, we had a lot of fun, and the experience has always remained one of the highlights of my life."

The *Chuck-Walla* was a trifle smaller in format than the present day magazine of the digest type. But it was extraordinarily well printed, and its whole appearance, butcher-paper cover and all, was so suggestive of Elbert Hubbard's *The Philistine*, current of that period, that many readers accused the editors of aping the famous author of "A Message to Garcia." This aroused their ire, and one of them wrote, "We can't help it if Elbert happens to write stuff that reminds you of the *Chuck-Walla*, only we hope that Elbert's flock of Philistines will not mistake us for their leader and follow our trail..." He suggests that Hubbard's satellites, "pampered young sprigs of old Adam, effete society, need a new dope. Give them a few shots of desert stamina. Prod them up with a literary fork heated under an Inyo county sun and watch them jump to the new music. A few of the worst cases might yelp and clap their dainty white hands to the seat of their white trousers and rub the sore spot withal, but believe us it would do them good. We have all the curatives in the desert for mental and physical diseases. If you have a moral leper, bring him to the desert. The pure air and the sunshine will cure him if anything can. Your mental patients, your scum of the Four Hundred, if there is a cure for them, seek for it on the desert. Dose them with natural sodium, souse them in our boracic springs, rub them off with the sand of porphyry and malachite, swelter them in the sunshine, cool them off in the desert night air, and if it won't cure them it will make angels of them, but believe us it will be effective. If a man comes here without a head he will soon get one or cease to need one, and you can trust the Funerals for that."

Later I shall try to bring you more of the tidbits from this, probably the most valuable of all of Greenwater's output. For now I must be content to advise those anosmatic lads who smuggle home pornographic sandwiches from the drug store, and to the attention of the outwardly whited ladies who surreptitiously nibble at said hors de'oeuvres d'ordure, that the *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* carried at its masthead the title, *A Magazine for Men.* And having read it, I find that it was, and, hence, fit for ladies as well. "Published in the desert at the brink of Death Valley, mixing the dope, cool from the mountains and hot from the desert, and withal putting out a concoction with which you can do as you damn please as soon as you have paid for it. Price ten cents."

Inyokel had the opportunity to meet the publisher of the *Death Valley Chuck-Walla*, Carl Glasscock:

> *January 29, 1939.* A week after my extensive quotations from Carl Glasscock's defunct *Death Valley Chuck-Walla*, I heard that he was in the vicinity of Death Valley and looking for me. My informant confided that the western writer had seen a copy of the *Register*. This did not set me at ease. Although I was sure the material was not copyrighted, "one never knows." So with an assumed bravado I faced the gentleman and his wife at the Amargosa Hotel, and found them not only not bent on mayhem but cordial and grateful for the reference. They are now engaged in research for a volume on the valley, similar to those already published on the Mother Lode and the Goldfield-Rhyolite region. Carl does the interviewing, the Mrs. the secretarial tasks, research in old newspaper files, etc. He told me how he and his brother, Harry, who had worked with him on the *Chuck-Walla*, came to found the *Owens Valley Herald* of happy memory. Colonel W.T. Stovall of Bishop, whose encomium of Inyo I have quoted here, was apparently a progenitor of the chamber of commerce, All Year and Californians, Inc., type of booster, and he persuaded the young Glasscocks and C.E. Kunze that there was room for another newspaper in Bishop. Hence the *Herald*, which Carl abandoned to Harry's care a few months later, and which breathed its last when Los Angeles stamped out the last spark of Owens Valley's agriculture. Carl apprised me that the colonel had done some fighting in Mexico at the time of Juarez. So obnoxious had he made himself to the unfortunate Maximilian, Emperor of Mexico, that one of the retired soldier's cherished possessions was a letter from the doomed ruler reading in part: "I understand that you are a big man. Fear not, I shall not eat until I find a tree tall enough to hang you..."

Later the Padre met Glasscock at a California Newspaper Publishers Association meeting and took a ribbing from him regarding his errors in reporting about the non-existent *Greenwater Gazette:*

> *March 12, 1939.* That man was here again. And for all of me I do not particularly care whether he ever returns or not. He–Carl B. Glasscock I mean–stood up before the California Newspaper Publishers Association in gay mood assembled at Death Valley on Feb. 25 and said–and ex-Governor Merriam sitting right beside him too, and Idwal Jones in front, and Johnny Long and all the big shots and their wives, nearly 150 of them. Well, he said, looking right at me, with the Padre sticking his elbow in my ribs, "I am here tonight to address you upon early days at Greenwater at the request of another writer, a columnist who uses the pseudonym of Inyokel. As I was casting

about for a proper introduction I decided I would quote 'Sage and Tumbleweed' of March 1, 1936. May I read it to you? (Mr. Editor: Please permit me to put the following in a separate paragraph, with a little line between it and its predecessor and successor. Please! Even if it does not make sense, as anybody can see after he had read this sad tale. I want to memorialize this man's iniquity. He shall suffer as I have suffered.)"

So he read, Glasscock I mean: "Down on the lawn.."[as quoted above from Sage and Tumbleweed]:

Now if this author fellow–Glasscock, I mean, had stopped there it would not have been too bad. He would have had a good sendoff on his voyage on the sea of memory, we would all have smiled at the Greenwater cuckoo, and I could still hold up my head amongst decent people. But did he do that? Listen. "Now, that is a base libel. There never was a *Greenwater Gazette.* That press was mine, and on it was printed the *Death Valley Chuck-Walla*. I was one of the publishers, and, whatever may have been the drinking habits of my competitors, the *Chuck-Walla* editors were never 'too drunk to be conscious of the passage of time'." Whereupon the guests, like a mob in a Roman circus, laughed and applauded, while a dying columnist gasped upon the sands of Death Valley. The Padre? He positively gloated at my misery. "Believe Johnny Mills, will you? Better look around the banquet hall and see if there are any more ghosts rising to accuse you. Remember Macbeth!"

Out of the haze that enveloped me after that blow I dimly recall an experience of my tormentor in those Death Valley days at the beginning of the century. An itinerant printer named Billy who had drunk himself to death–I will swear Glasscock admitted that much–lay in his tent awaiting burial. No undertaker having yet thought Greenwater offered sufficient openings to attract him, Glasscock took over the obsequies. He ordered a coffin made at the lumber yard and proceeded to give his erstwhile compositor a much-needed bath. He filched a sheet from the quarters of Miss Olive Hume, a city gal from Oakland who had come out to the desert to get "atmosphere," and who expected such niceties as linen. The sheet, with some beer barrel packing, provided fair padding for the casket, and in this Billy was laid, his right hand across his breast.

Thus Tiger Lil saw him. Tiger Lil, who, insomuch as she was anybody's, was Billy's girl. "Tall and freckled, red-haired, and slightly wilted," Glasscock pictured her. "Just the way Billy would hold a poker hand," she mused, and was on her way. But she returned in the amateur undertaker's absence, because he found that Billy now held a hand of cards against his coat, five aces.

Thus fortified, this poor vagrant was driven to a hillside grave in a grocery wagon. Tiger Lil and the saloon-keeper riding up with the driver. The grocery clerk, a former student for the ministry, read the prayers, and Miss Hume, the postmaster's wife, and a couple of other "respectable" women sang "Nearer My God, to Thee." Which would have been a suitable ending

for the narrative if Tiger Lil and another lady of the evening had not protested at the saloon that night that the singing had been awful. Challenged to improve upon it, the two demi-mondes climbed a faro table and rendered "Nearer My God, to Thee" as it had never been done before, or since. "And really much better, too, than the others had done it" added Glasscock. How did he find out? You see, I am still smarting.

And another item intrigued him:

February 13, 1938. When the town of Rhyolite, on the eastern edge of Death Valley, passed from the land of the living, not the least of the splendid buildings abandoned was the modern masonry railroad station. Telegraph blanks and time-tables were still scattered around, and one story has it that the mummy of Rhyolite's renowned cow–did I ever tell you that tale–was found in the waiting-room, where she had died expecting the train. Now N.C. Westmoreland has "purchased" the old terminus and, calling it "The Ghost Casino," is operating it as a unique roadhouse for desert tourists. When Wash Cahill observed a skeleton perched in one corner of the establishment, the proprietor explained that it lent color to the place and that there were a lot more nearby he intended to dig up for atmosphere. Strikes me it is going to be tough on some of the old prospectors thus hailed before the bar. Many of them had possessed a noble thirst, in fact, some of them died of it. And now they are permanent guests of the house, the chance of a lifetime coming after death, the opportunity to get a skinful and–they cannot take it! *Nil nisi bonum,* as the Latins put it "Nothing but bone."

Rhyolite was the subject of this tale:

June 21, 1936. Perry Lamona used to operate the old Hercules mine, below the Modoc, in the days when the Panamint area was much more remote than now. He knew the Tonopah and the Rhyolite booms, and was of the first into Greenwater when that copper camp attracted Clark and the Guggenheims. So early were he and his partner at Greenwater that they managed to stake out about every piece of ground not located by the discoverers. On their way out to get supplies, they left their names on a sign above their claims. They found on their return that someone had written beneath: "Ground Hogs."

Perry remembers trying to camp in Rhyolite one night after the town had faded into the category of ghost cities. His partner and he, who had known it in its heyday, thought the railroad station should offer safe and comfortable shelter. But one end of it had been pre-empted by a family of Indians, and a little black head stuck out of every window. So Perry repaired to the other waiting room. But he did not spend the night there either. For it was

unmistakably occupied by a dead cow. How she got there, in a land where no grass grows, and how she died there are another story.

Bourke "Buck" Lee tells that story in his *Death Valley Men,* and, not having my copy at hand, I do not recall the names of the adventurous gentlemen involved, but I do recall that they were from the old sod. Striking it rich at Rhyolite, and getting disgusted with canned milk, they decided in solemn council that they should have a cow. And so, from somewhere, a cow was shipped in. Undoubtedly the hay was shipped in too, and it is of record that the partners waxed merry on the fat of the land. But Rhyolite folded up, and the miners moved on, leaving their faithful bossy to shift for herself. It is a desert legend that she found her way to the station, but missed the last train. Maybe it was not a milk train anyhow.

Into one of the saloons in Rhyolite at its best strolled two clerical gentlemen, Bishop Scanlan of Salt Lake and one of his priests. A gambler, Jim Clayton, sidled up and invited them to a drink, which was not refused. Then Bishop Scanlan showed him a document he had been carrying about, a subscription list for a church in Rhyolite. He had collected $300. "Let me take that, Reverend. You don't know how to work this angle. This is my game. You stay here." So, taking the list, he made the rounds of the tables where men were playing for high stakes, while the bishop and his confrere looked on. If the good men did not know that Jim Clayton was quick on the trigger those at the tables were not so innocent, and donations piled up at an amazing speed. In no time he returned with $1,200 or $1,300, and the success of the building program was assured. The church today serves as a hall at Ryan, the former borax mine and now winter resort, on the edge of Death Valley. Its bell hangs in Scotty's castle. Gone, too, are the days when Bishops could count on gunmen to take up the collection, and this effeminate age depends upon quilt awards and whist parties for the ever-necessary evil.

He did update the practice in the following story:

June 21, 1936. In the days of Al Capone and his henchmen, I heard a tale that is of a piece with Perry's Rhyolite yarn. It seems that a Chicago convent was in need, as convents sometimes are, of additions and improvements, and there was no money in sight. Novenas began and ended, but the heaven-sent donor failed to appear. Then one old nun remembered that she had heard that one of the little fellows she had taught in the fourth grade and then lost sight of had come into big money. She looked him up in the telephone book and called him to the convent. She was right; he had made money. Surely, too, he remembered having received all the schooling he had, previous to his subsequent education in a mysterious fashion, at the hands of the good old sister. So he followed her about as she showed him what they needed, and assured her that he would attend to it. Next day, the

workmen came, and the community thanked God for this answer to prayer, for the improvements proved to be all that they had dreamed of. Only when the pastor in an idle moment asked the name of the benefactor did they learn that their sweet old sister had called to their aid one of the ranking public enemies, a gangster of the first water.

I cannot find trace of strong-arm methods in the early Church collections in Inyo, although the fairs and dances held in the gala mining days must have brought in good money and bad. It was almost 50 years from the hour that those rough and apparently irreligious souls started the movement for a church in Lone Pine that the little chapel finally took form. From their places in eternity may God grant them a vision of the four Sisters of the Holy Family arriving in Inyo in the last days of June this year, and teaching, two by two, at Lone Pine and Bishop, the grandchildren and great grandchildren of these pioneers. The vacation schools under the supervision of nuns is a red-letter event in Inyo, and God's prevision of these days may have helped into eternal happiness the souls of those whose seemingly fruitless efforts have brought such splendid and abundant fruit. May he continue to give them increase.

Not far from Rhyolite were the towns of Leadfield and Beatty, once well-populated and booming:

May 29, 1938. "It is a unique day in mining," said Lieutenant-Governor Sullivan of Nevada as he surveyed the scene at Leadfield on the afternoon of Sunday, March 14. The lieutenant-governor hit the proverbial nail squarely on the head when he said this. No better opinion could be expressed. Mining has had a long history, but the scenes in Beatty and Leadfield on Saturday and Sunday were unique in that history. ...The Julian special train from Los Angeles–12 Pullmans, two diners, and a baggage car hauled by two puffing, tooting engines–pulled into the Tonopah and Tidewater station at Beatty at 8:30 Sunday morning. It carried 340 passengers, including 24 women. ...A six-piece Negro orchestra brought here by Mr. Julian from Los Angeles played jazzy music at the dinner, which was served in Ole's inn. Oscar Olsen said afterward that he had fed 1,120 persons that day...Spoke Julian after the feast: "I didn't bring you here to buy Western Lead. If you don't buy it I will be better satisfied, no fooling. This baby stands on her own feet. I want you all to feel that you are one big family, a happy family. I have a few dollars, enough to care for you all. Talking about a wild-cat state, next to the state of California–and God knows I love her; I bless her when I get up and kiss her when I go to bed at night–next to California I love Nevada."

To turn from Leadfield and Californians and mining, Saturday night and early Sunday morning in Beatty were wild times. It is estimated that 3,000 people were crowded into the little town. "About 4 o'clock this morning

she was a hummer," a Tonopah man said. "The dance lasted until 3:30 and after that we fought. I lost my cap, but I have a good hat. I don't know where my overcoat is, but I don't need one here anyway. My automobile? Oh, I don't know what became of that."...At least a dozen men had blackeyes. One man's shirt was spattered with the gore of his opponent, whom he knocked out cold for 15 minutes, and for part of the 15 it was thought he was gone for good. ...At one time a ring was established and the younger generation threw their hats into it one by one. As a hat was picked up a fight resulted. The going was best about daylight. One Tonopah man put down and kept down eight in one of the most renowned of the battles. He felled them as fast as they came up...All in all, it was a great affair. ...Beatty and Leadfield are co-operating as all good neighboring towns should co-operate, and in years to come both of them, it is hoped by their friends, will continue to prosper.

Forgive me for not telling you ere this that the paragraphs above are quotations from Volume I, No. 2, of the *Leadfield Chronicle*, dated Leadfield, Inyo county, March 22, 1926. The paper is yellow and brittle from the years it lay in a tunnel mouth over there, whence it was retrieved by Ray Goodwin, superintendent of Death Valley National Monument, in which Leadfield now rests. It is a sad memento of "a unique day in mining," when C.C. Julian despite the warnings of the California Corporation Commission, undertook to create a full-blown mining boom in the most inaccessible corner of Inyo. Julian had everything, special train, free gasoline, free banquet, imported jazz orchestras, free liquor–everything but the ore. There will be some who read this who may have suffered in another and later Julian promotion, his famous oil company in Southern California. It was this scandal which prompted his flight to China and his suicide there. But there were none who dreamed of these eventualities in Leadfield on March 14, 1926. "All in all, it was a great affair."

You may find Leadfield today by driving west from Beatty, or east through Daylight pass, to the sign on the Amargosa desert that reads "Titus Canyon." It is a one-way road, so you need fear no contretemps on the narrow and precipitous shelf men have scooped from the cliffs to lead you down the defile. Of all the grandeur that is Death Valley's, Titus Canyon can claim a lion's share. In it is to be found every color of less precipitous rifts, but from end to end this titanic fault in the Grapevine Mountains is one of the world's wonders. At the lower levels the road follows, for it cannot do otherwise, the crack in the mountain that winds and winds for miles with scarce a foot between the running boards and the thousand-foot walls. Your breath stops when you pause to think of your fate if a cloudburst broke loose in the canyon above while you were driving down. You thank God, too, that the Park Service has forbidden up travel, for it would be hard to say which chauffeur would be in the worse predicament. Neither could turn,

and the gravel wash is the world's worst road-base for climbing. The town of Leadfield stood in the widest spot in the pass, at the foot of the steepest grade. Today, not more than two buildings remain under roof, and not a single human dwells within leagues. You won't find Ole's Inn, but you can still read part of the title of the Pioneer Club on a weatherbeaten wall. Everywhere lie ruin and debris, and as you pick your way amid scattered timbers and rusted iron the black eyes of abandoned tunnels gaze unblinkingly at you from the hills, watchdogs of a ghost town which once knew hope and despair, truth and falsehood, life and death. Leadfield is no more, but it is still a splendid spot for meditation on the vanity of human glory.

Old mines and lost gold were not the only objects that were topics for Inyokel's lengthy tall tales. The story of the "Ship of the Desert," written in 1875 and given to the Padre by his friend Mrs. Eva Lee Gunn, is quoted here in its entirety:

April 21, 1935. I offer no apology for copying the following from the faded original, written in a flowing hand on blue-ruled paper. I regret only that it may overrun a little the usual bounds of these wanderings, but, save for one stanza, I could find naught that could be omitted without spoiling the story. Mrs. Eva Lee Gunn, widow of the Jack Gunn whose "Woodland Daisy" chased Ely's fears away, found the document among her husband's effects, and to her discernment I owe this opportunity of publishing this racy fragment of Inyo fiction. Robert Service would have enjoyed the tale, even if the rhyme at times seems to have anticipated the advent of Ogden Nash. What, if aught, the writers knew of the legends of the Headless Horseman, the Flying Dutchman, or their ilk we have no way of discovering, but it is evident that these old-timers (and they were good men all) had quaffed deeply of Hassayampa, that river whose waters, once tasted, make it impossible for the partaker to distinguish henceforth between fact and fancy. And Jack Gunn may have packed home a canteen from the river's brink, for Mrs. Gunn confided to us that "you know, they have found a ship's mast in Death Valley."

THE SHIP OF THE DESERT

(Written at Olancha, Inyo County, Calif., in 1875 by W.T. Grant and Pap Walker)

In the Inyo Mountains, where grows the stately pine,
Where the rocks are torn asunder,
And bear marks of untold time.
Where the restless deer and panther stalk abroad not fearing men,
Where the grizzly and the cougar have their dark and lonesome den;
Where the lovely Paiute maidens wander forth with guileless mien
To gather pine nuts for the winter, for their camp down in Saline,–

There amid the lonely canyons comes a torrent rushing down,
Tumbling over rocks and boulders, with a strange, unearthly sound;
There upon a naked bedrock, jutting far out o'er the stream,
Sat a band of old prospectors, like the spirits of the scene.
They had heard that Spanish legend–how in days of old,
A hunter on the mountain had found a ledge of gold;
How he went down to the valley and started with a train,
But was lost out on the desert and was never seen again.

...Old Uncle Dave was talking and he told a wondrous tale–
Of a ship that had been drifting at the mercy of a gale,
How she sailed up in the desert after cruising 'round a while,
At last had come to anchor close by a big sand pile.
Then they lowered all the small boats and struck out for the land
But were overtaken by a mighty storm of sand,
And of all that noble ship's crew not a soul was seen again,
Except sometimes an anchor or perhaps an anchor chain.

How his pardner once while hunting for the long-lost Gunsight lead
Saw that ship a-sailing round the desert at full speed–
As she came towards him and went sailing quickly by
The lookout in the foretop sung out "Al-ker-li!"
How the taller 'gin to melt in his pardner as he lay
All night beside his burro waiting for the day.
And when the sun had risen and the daylight came around
His burro lay beside him dead as blazes on the ground.
Then he rolled his blankets and struck back for the mine
And for seven solid days he never looked behind,–
He never had a drink of water or ate a blessed thing
Until he struck a mining camp,–they call it Resting Springs.
There the miners gather 'round him and as he told a fearful tale
Of his wanderings on the desert,–it made their cheeks grow pale.
They filled him up with whisky–but Bill was too far gone,
They showed him every kindness, but his spirit passed beyond.

Old Uncle Dave ceased talking and a silence on them fell
Until McPhail laid down his pipe, then spoke and broke the spell.
"If that is what you call it,–that very thing I've seen,"
And he pointed with his finger to the valley of Saline.
"It was one summer evening outside my cabin door–
I was sitting on an oil-can pounding up some ore,
When I thought I heard the echo of a digger's dying wail
As it floated up the valley, borne on the evening gale.

I began to feel uneasy, I shut my cabin door
And walked out on the hillside to look the valley o'er.
There below me on the desert I saw such a fearful sight,
I could not move a muscle, I was paralyzed with fright,–
It was that ship of Davy's, with a ghostly crew all manned
And like the very devil she was tearing through the sand.
At last she came so near me I could hear the captain bawl,
As he passed order, 'Forward man! the flying jib down haul!'
Then my legs got started and away they packed McPhail;
Like a double-barrelled shotgun I went up the Lone Pine trail;
When I reach the summit I turned and said 'Goodbye,'
But the lookout in the foretop only answered 'Al-ker-li!'"

Jack Ely had been sitting with his chin between his hands,
His upper lip was shaking as his story he began:
"I once had for a pardner a wild son-of-a-gun,
He came down here from Bodie, a land above the sun;
It was the vigilantes that made him leave that camp;
The chances are you knew him–his name was Billy Grant.
How I talked and toiled and labored to lead this wayward youth
From the trail of the unrighteous and lead him to the truth.
In vain were all my teachings, he would pass them heedless by,
And smile a gentle, sad, sweet smile and murmur, 'Jak-yer-li.'

"We were out upon the desert–I forget the day and year,
Hunting the Breyfogle, along with Reuben Spear;
For weeks and months we traveled, nothing had we struck–
I trusted Him who made the mines, and William cussed the luck.
You talk about your weather–we had it there, you bet;
The days and nights were all the same, I think I feel them yet;
It melted both our burros, their bones lie side by side,
And the yaller-bellied lizards just turned on their backs and died…

"We were loafing in our camp, near the sink of Furnace Krick;
Our grub had all but petered and we had lost our nip;
Five hundred miles from anywhere–things looked mighty bad,
To hoof it into Darwin was the only show we had.
The sun had done its setting, the moon just come in sight,
When out upon the desert we saw a moving light;
First a red light, then a white light, then it shone a bluish grey,
You bet yer life it scared me when Reub began to pray.

"It kept moving nearer, until there came in view,
The largest ship I ever saw, in fact as big as two;

Not a rustle broke the silence, everything was still,
And down my back there wandered a cold, an icy chill.
She was passing on to leave us when my pardner–foolish boy,
Stepped out into the darkness and yelled out 'Ship ahoy!'
I heard the creaking of her rigging as they braced around her spars,
The light from off her catheads shone like two burning stars;
My blood ran cold within me, my brain began to reel,
I saw Pap Walker on the deck, the devil at the wheel.

"My pardner then sprang forward to where a rope was lowered,
He took a turn around his neck, they hoisted him on board;
I saw him climb the rigging and I heard his farewell cry,
As he sung out from the foretop,'So long, old man. Goodbye!'
She went sailing up the valley, in silence as she came,
My pardner he went with her–him I never saw again;
A faintish spell was on me, a kind of sickly dread,
I turned to look for Reuben, but Reuben he had fled.

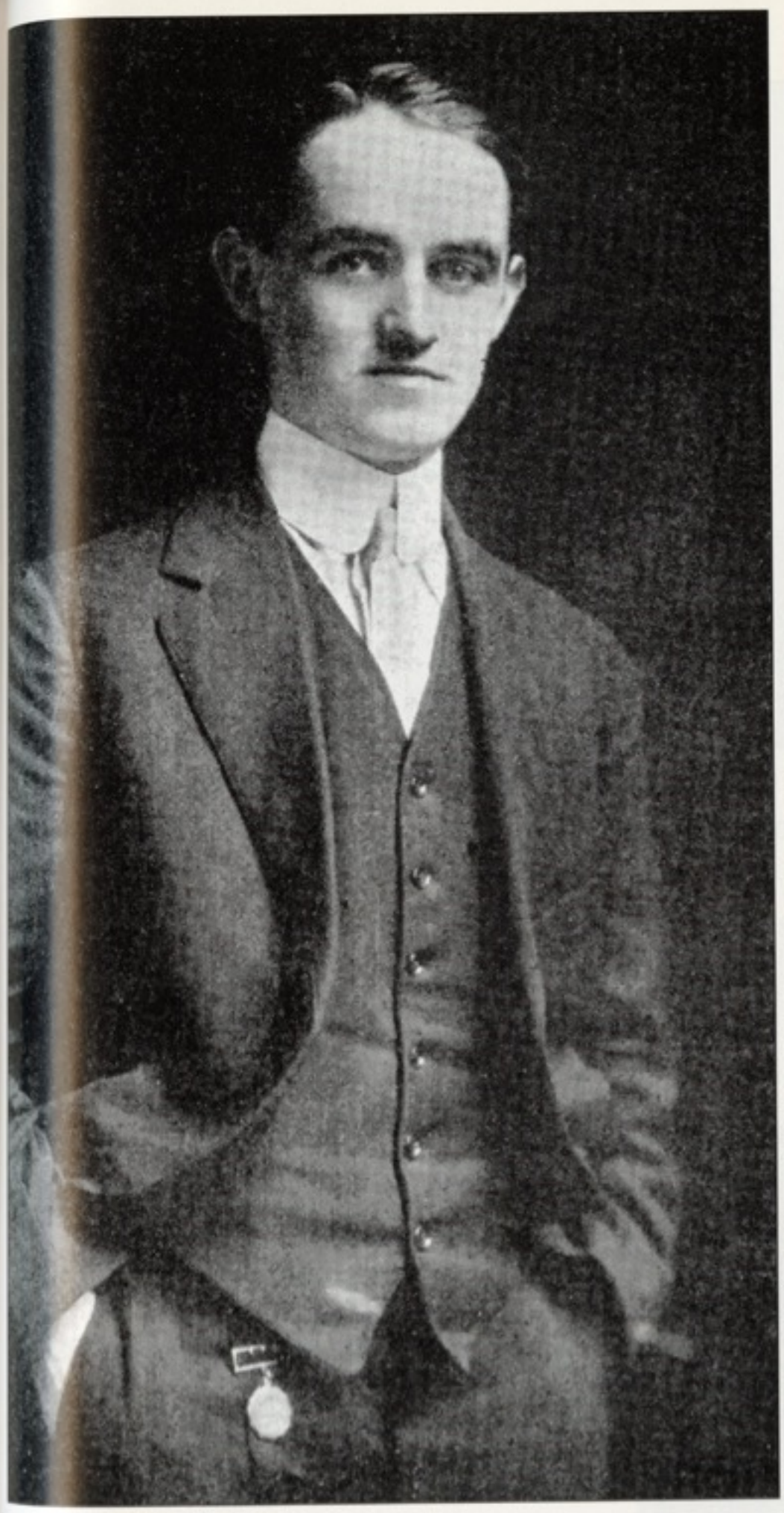
"Next day I left the desert, a lonely broken man;
When I arrived at Darwin I could scarcely stand;
Jack Gunn's Woodland Daisy soon braced me up all right,
But if I live a thousand years I'll not forget that night."
David looked at Dan, and Daniel looked at Dave,
Then both with admiration at Jack Ely they did gaze;
McPhail took up his pipe, old Davy heaved a sigh,
And muttered something like, "Blow me bloody eye!
Jack, when I tell a story, I sometimes prevaricate,
But I think of all the liars you're the damnedest in the state."

Mention has been made previously of the Padre's chaplaincy of the CCC especially in the Lone Pine area. However, more of his time was spent with the Death Valley contingents. They spent the summers at Wildrose Camp and the winters at Cow Creek, just north of Furnace Creek. The boys there were particularly isolated and he did his utmost to bring entertainment to them as well as spiritual services. He encouraged the movie stars that were filming in Lone Pine to take some time off, if available, and meet with the CCC boys. They were sure to get an appreciative audience. He encouraged the boys to finish their high school education and in general made their life a little brighter. He told of a Christmas eve spent with them at Death Valley and offered his Christmas greetings:

December 24, 1939. A white chip of moon hangs high in the night. Another has tumbled into Owens Lake and lies spattered on the breeze-pressed ripples. Shimmering pinheads of stars mark where God has tucked back the folds of darkness from His earth. Far up on the ebony wall of the Inyos a yellow dot of light flames forth, and dies. It leaps again, and settles down to a persistent point. A miner has come home for Christmas. Above the motor's rhythm no other sound goes abroad this evening–the Padre and I are alone on our ride. Midnight Mass for the New York lads at the CCC camp is over, 200 lonely sons of the city have thrown their hearts into the singing of "Silent Night" and "It Came Upon the Midnight Clear," so vigorously in fact that the Padre muttered, "The song the angels swung," and we are bound for another camp in the Argus range for the Mass at dawn. Dear friends in the far places, by your fire or your family board or your Christmas tree; friends, whose fare is spread on the oil-cloth or the scrubbed boards of a refectory table; friends who toil this night that others may speed to their own hearth; friends who watch and wait and pray for the heavens to open again and rain down the Just One; to all, Inyokel and the Padre bid the peace that is ours on the desert this Christmas eve, the peace of those who hear the music from beyond the stars and are speeding down to Bethlehem. As wide as the desert and as deep as the night and as merry as the dancing moon on the laughing lake is the Christmas we wish you, for all those creatures are singing the cradle song of the King, who is laid in a manger!

And then in a more mundane mood, he wrote of the realities of the CCC program and its accompanying headaches:

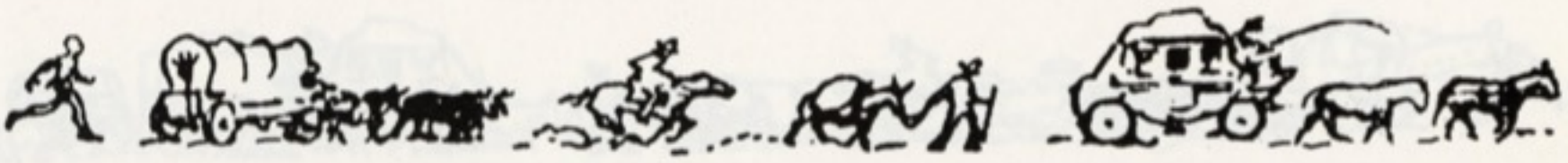
August 14, 1938. No mere visitor to a CCC camp has any idea of the snarls of red tape that accompanies the management of this branch of the New Deal. This is said in no spirit of criticism, for undoubtedly this is the old army way. But if you were a company commander and had to prepare any one of over a thousand forms in quadruplicate for any and every occurrence in your camp, from the amount of sugar in the bin to a torn sheet, or from a pimple on a lad's chin to a sparkplug replacement, you would occasionally feel like rising and singing, "My Country, 'Tis of Thee." I have seen a file two inches thick replete with letters from every interested officer or authority from California to Washington and back dealing with the responsibility for a couple of burned-out connecting rods on a truck. I believe the final decision was made by some board or other that the driver, an enrollee, was to blame, and should refund the money to Uncle Sam out of his pay. It probably cost $500 in time and money to discover this momentous fact. Add to these little annoyances the isolation of such spots as Inyokern, where a New York company has just dug in without benefit of a neon light, subways, or sidewalks–or Wildrose, where all that stirs at night is the canvas tent roof, flapping the



The young John J. Crowley as a Holy Cross College graduate-yearbook photo 1915. *Courtesy Rev. John Nelligan, S.J., archivist Holy Cross College.*

Our Lady of Victory Church, on East Line St., Bishop, California as it appeared when Father Crowley first came to Inyo County in 1919. This was torn down to be replaced by Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church on Elm and Warren and now the library at Laws Museum. *Courtesy Catholic Extension Society.*

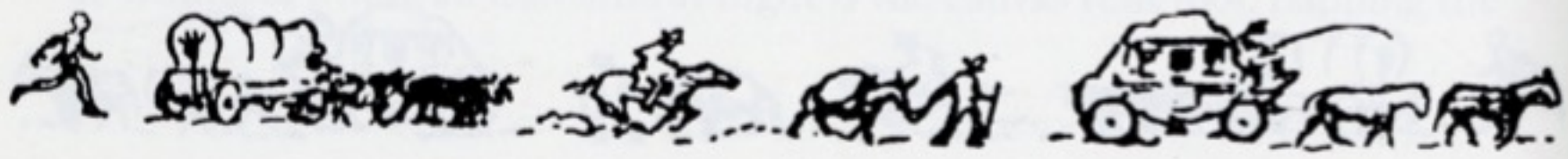
Santa Barbara Church, Randsburg, California–still standing today and much as it looked when built in 1904. Father Crowley was pastor there from 1919 to 1922. *Drawing by Francilu Hansen. Courtesy Cecilia Williams.*

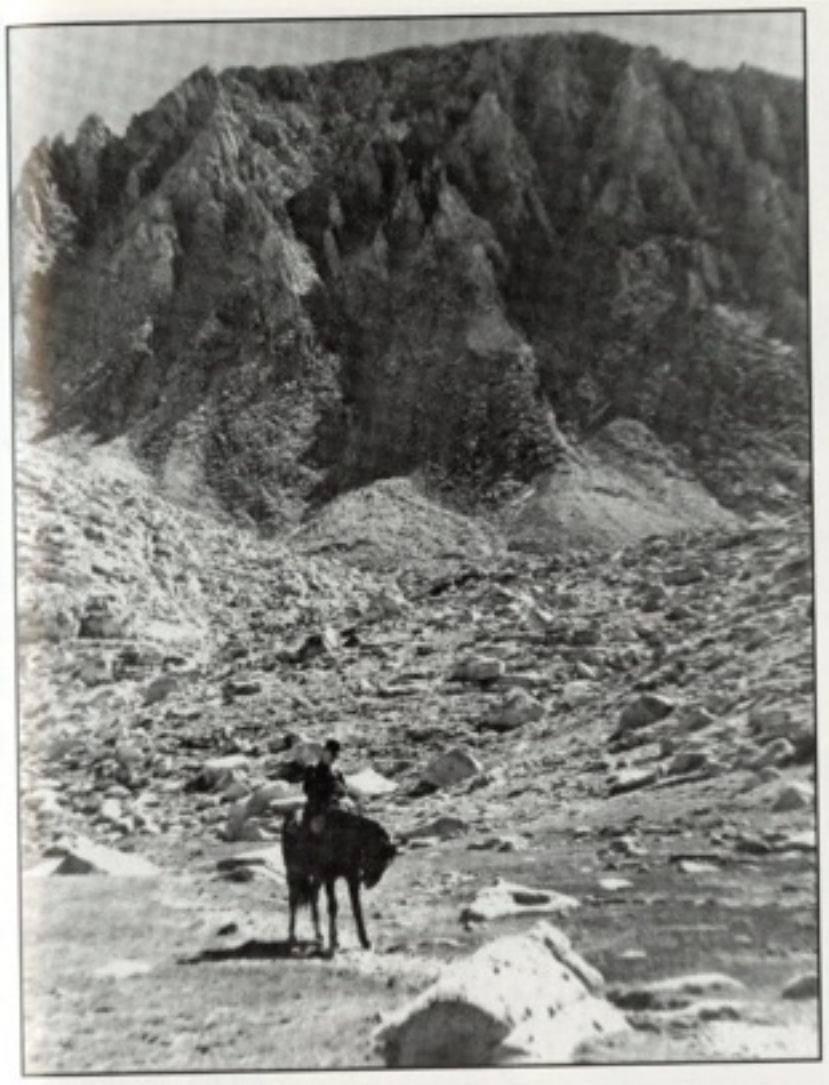


Old Santa Rosa Church, Lone Pine, California, dedicated in 1919 shortly before Father Crowley's arrival in Lone Pine. Bell tower added later. *Courtesy Eastern California Museum.*

Father Crowley taking a break at the pump in Swansea, California on the shores of Owens Lake. The dog may be one of his "mongrels," probably Cuff. *Courtesy Lou Pracchia.*

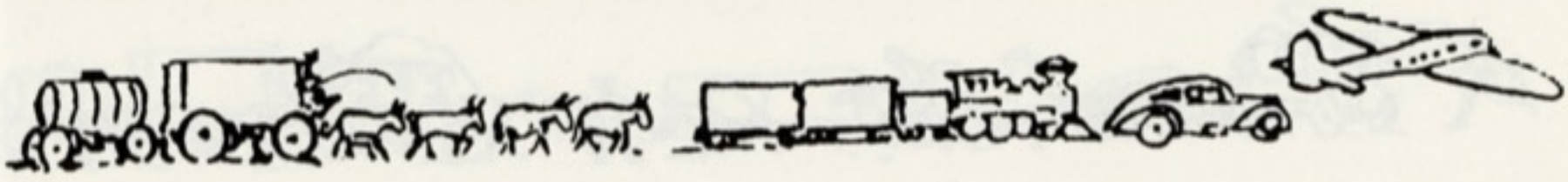
Dow Hotel and Santa Rosa Church showing Main Street as it looked in the early thirties. (Although Main Street is straight it appears distorted by the camera). *Courtesy Lynne Bunn.*





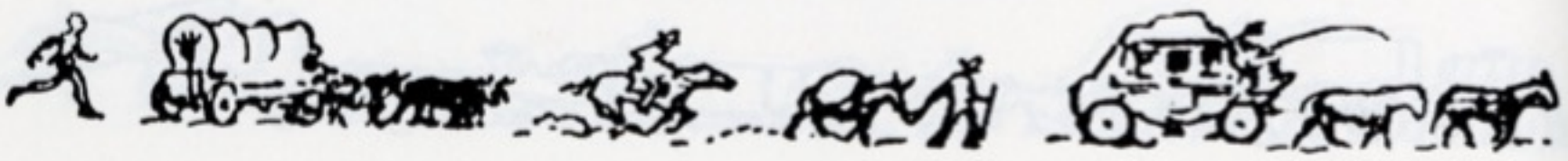
Father Crowley on horseback on Mt. Whitney trail. Curtis Phillips, photographer.
Courtesy Eastern California Museum.

Father Crowley saying Mass at the Smithsonian hut on the summit of Mt. Whitney with Harry Clinch, seminarian, serving his Mass, September 1934. *Courtesy Charles Shelton, photographer; published in the* Los Angeles Times *1938.*



The Crowley family at Father Fred Crowley's ordination in 1934. Left to right seated are: Sister Petra, Sister Josephine, Sister Paula, Mrs. Nora Hansen. Standing are: Rev. John J. Crowley, Rev. Fred Crowley, Rev. Thomas Lyne, (uncle from Ireland), Rev. George Crowley, S.J. and Frank M. Crowley. Photo in *Central California Register*. *Courtesy Lou Pracchia.*

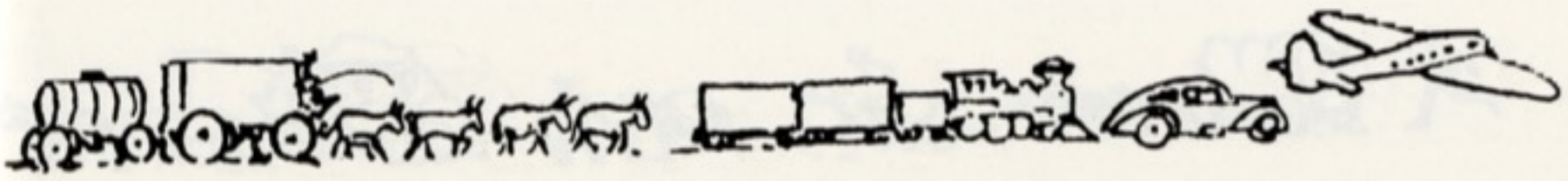
Father Crowley at the Dayton-Harris grave just before the dedication of the monument of the two Death Valley prospectors, 1936. *Courtesy National Park Service.*



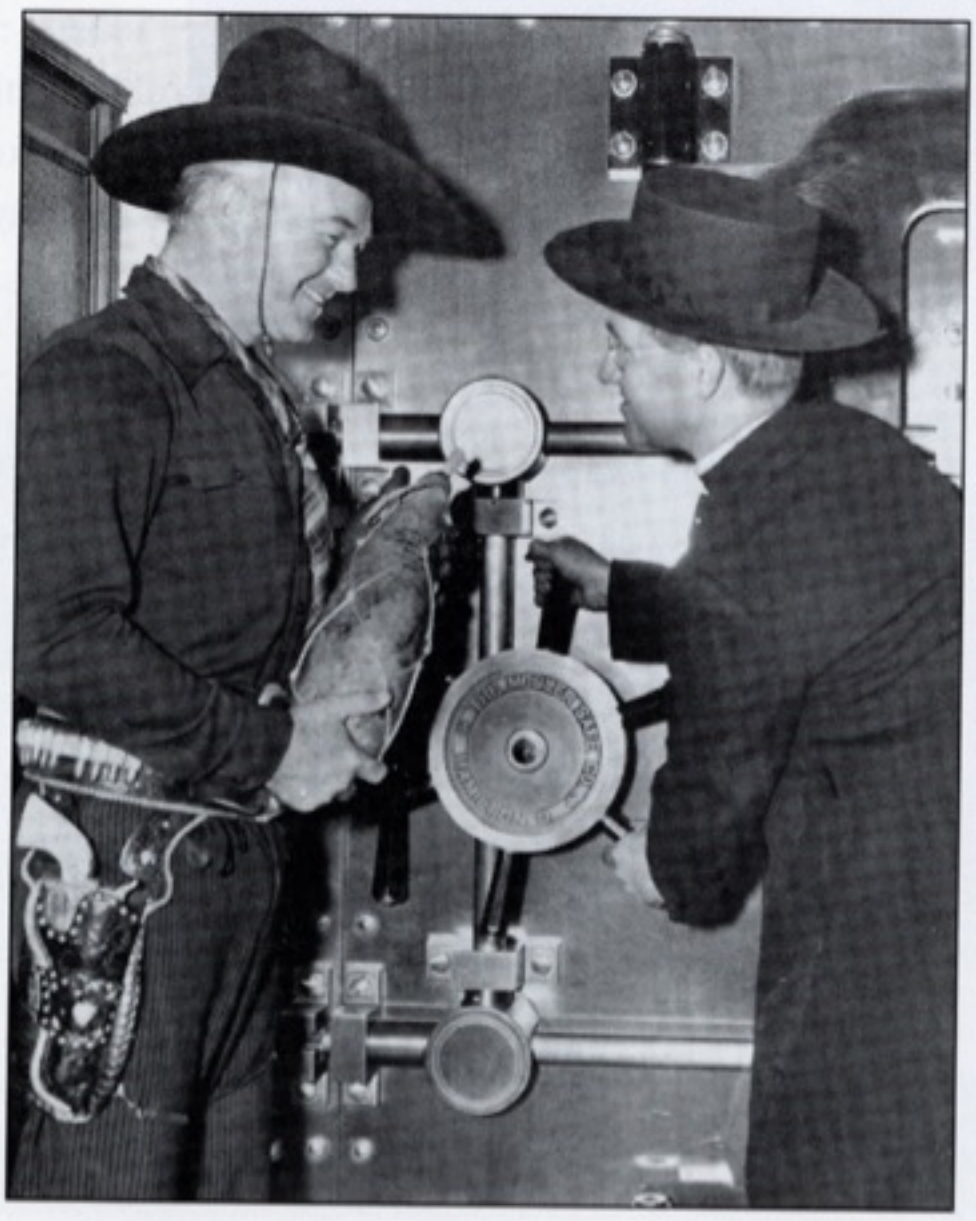
Father Crowley blessing Catherine Byrne's fishing tackle at the Fisherman's Mass in Santa Rosa Church, May 1937. Curtis Phillips, photographer. *Courtesy Eastern California Museum.*

Father Crowley at the train station in Fresno meeting Lou Gehrig and Babe Ruth who came for an exhibition baseball game in 1927. Claude C. Laval, photographer. *Courtesy the Image Group.*

Father Crowley, Leo Carrillo, actor, and Captain Cadwell, commander of the CCC at a CCC entertainment event in Death Valley. *Courtesy Maturango Museum.*

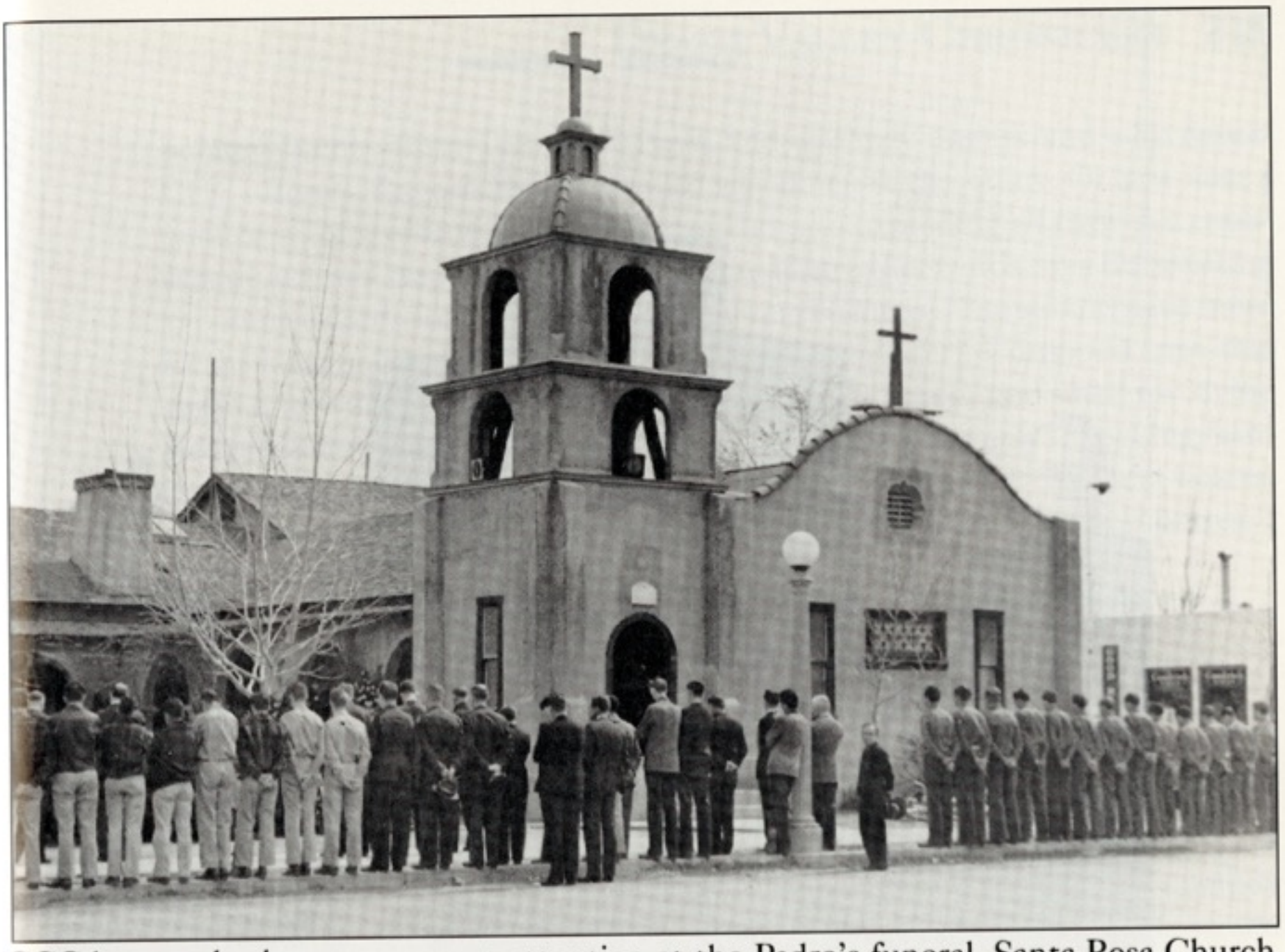


Father Crowley with Dr. and Mrs. Howard Dueker and Mr. and Mrs. Jack Hopkins planning the Wedding of the Waters, 1937. Curtis Phillips, photographer. *Courtesy Eastern California Museum.*



Father Crowley and William Boyd (Hopalong Cassidy) depositing water gourd at the Bank of America, Lone Pine during Wedding of the Waters, 1937. Curtis Phillips, photographer. *Courtesy Maturango Museum.*

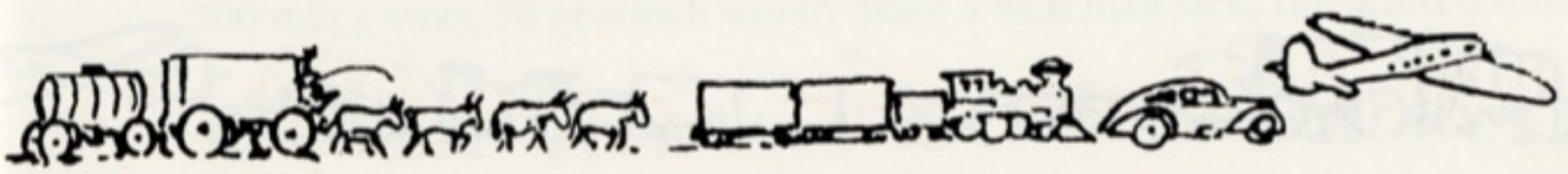
Tray, the Padre's dog who was with him at the end. *Courtesy Lou Pracchia.*



CCC boys and other mourners at attention at the Padre's funeral, Santa Rosa Church, Lone Pine. *Courtesy Maturango Museum.*

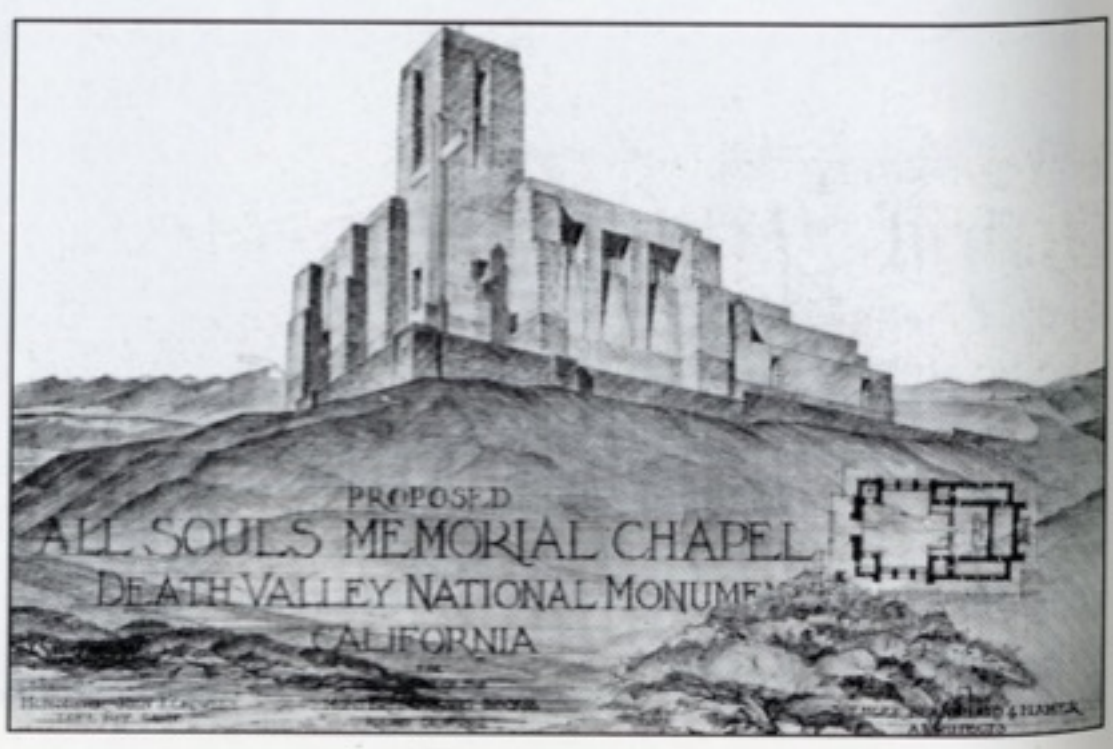
Ralph Merritt at the Father Crowley Memorial, Highway 14. *Courtesy Maturango Museum.*

Father Crowley's cabin at Whitney Portal built by Steve Esteves and Dobe Gunnarson. *Courtesy Byron Hansen.*

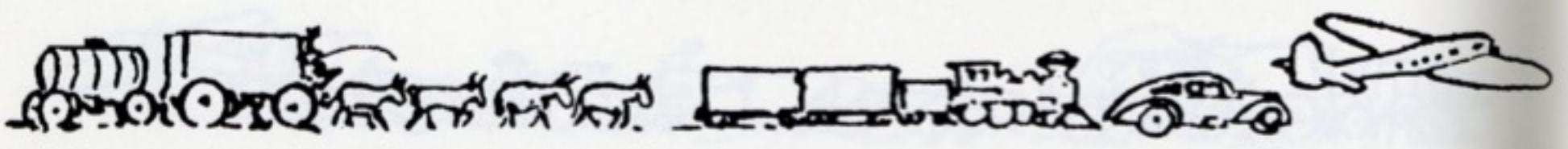


Father Fred Crowley, Nora Crowley Hansen and Father George Crowley at the Vista Point Monument to Father Crowley on Highway 190 (road to Death Valley) in 1963. *Courtesy Eastern California Museum.*

Monument to Father Crowley at Crowley Lake, 1941. *Courtesy Maturango Museum.*



Architect's drawing of the proposed All Souls Memorial Chapel in Death Valley. From a postcard sent out as a promotional fund-raiser by the Padre. *Courtesy Irene Gage Sundberg.*



belated breeze from Telescope Peak, and you may understand why desert CCC officers' fingernails are chewed way down to the quick. Or how near a poor devil of a reserve lieutenant can come to exploding all over the countryside when a rasping inspector from headquarters winds up a devastating snooping expedition with this comment on the mess, "You should have more fresh meat on this menu. Do you stuff beef hearts?" I dropped into this camp a few minutes after the inspector had departed, and until my dying day I shall not forget the altogether adequate and extremely intriguing fashion in which both the mess officer and the C.O. suggested that beef hearts, and inspectors, could be disposed of. Knowing the justice of their prayer, I added a loud "Amen."

He recounted the joys and trials of one CCC recruit:

August 13, 1939.

Tom Winston, Los Angeles boy, lived in a CCC camp;
He found neither comfort nor joy,
But he had Aladdin's lamp...Be kind, gentle reader, to this poor parody on an old poem, for in no other way can I think of Tom Winston, whom the rest of the Wildrose camp knew as "Dorothy," perhaps because of one of his fantasies. For Tom liked to dream and, dreaming, to carry his listeners, usually newcomers, beyond the sallow shoulders of the flanking Panamints to firesides and lists and deeds of high enterprise in which Sir Thomas was the loving daddy or the Pretty Boy Floyd or the loping Lancelot, depending upon the veering of the wind or the phase of the moon. "Delusions of grandeur" would probably be the psychiatrist's jotting upon Tom's case, if Tom had been "psyched." But no one ever bothered the lanky lad with trick examinations, jabs, and reflexes over at Death Valley, because what harm could there be if he undertook the private construction of Spanish castles in the grand manner, or slapped green stain on the mess hall with his brush, keeping time to the rat-tat-tat of an ectoplasmic machine gun? Tom was the Topper who was forever making trips.

Rumor, that loose-tongued lady, is accused of reporting our fair hero as having expressed a desire for a broken arm or other small ailment that would secure him sick leave from camp and a journey to the city not many days ago. Perhaps this was the topic, perhaps he was only filling his lungs with the rare air of the stratosphere in which his astral self was floating at the moment–whatever the occasion, Tom swallowed a fragment of steak bone at supper last week and was instantly gasping in agony. Lieut. Herman Fulco, company doctor, found that the object had passed through the trachea into one of the bronchi, which, with the equipment at hand in camp, made surgery practically impossible. March Field, army medical headquarters, was 300 miles away, 50 of which would make a well man sick, the stretch from

Wildrose to Trona. And Wildrose has no phone connections with the world outside, none nearer than Trona. CCC headquarters at Van Nuys were officially off the air for the day, so that frantic appeals over the National Park Service short-wave radio brought no response. Tom Winston, to whom the barriers of space and time meant nothing when he was well, had become, as he lay choking on the desert, the most pressing problem of the Ninth Corps area of the army of the United States of America.

The radio operator was directed by Captain Cadwell to broadcast an emergency call to amateur operators in Southern California, asking that they try to reach headquarters by phone. Soon a contact was made and the message relayed to Wildrose that a 20-passenger army transport was en route to Trona to pick up the patient and carry him to March Field. "If the ship circles the field it will be a sign that the pilot will not be able to land because of conditions. Await further instructions there." Out across the dusty heat-soaked Panamint Valley bounced Dr. Fulco with Winston, whose cyanotic appearance told his suffering all too well. The physician told them that in case he saw a turn for the worse he was preparing to cut and "go in" to the boy's bronchi as a last resort.

Trona, and the roar of the big ship dropping down out of the night. Now he was going to set her down–no, he was circling. Dr Fulco's heart sank. But as the great bird rose, a flare spewed over the side. The pilot was feeling his way. He circled again, and again, dropping flares that lit up the cleared space below. At last, on the fourth circuit, he was satisfied, and the door of the transport opened for Tom Winston. The doctor who had flown up from March Field told Lieutenant Fulco that there was no bronchoscope at the southern hospital, and the sick lad had to be borne to Letterman General at San Francisco. And there today, for no ill reports have come back, Tom Winston, who clutched his rosary to his heart all the way from Death Valley to the Golden Gate, is breathing freely. But down at Wildrose his pals are awaiting his return with awe. They are sure that the transport plane will have been transformed into a roc long ere this, and that Tom Winston will find in that omnipotent steak-bone an Aladdin's lamp to be polished up for many a desert night's entertainment, perhaps a thousand and one. "Who knows."

A former CCC boy named Arthur Jaseau remembers being at Death Valley when the Padre was chaplain. Arthur was bugler, ambulance driver, infirmarian and also Father Crowley's altar server. He tells of the Padre's gentle but firm instructions: "don't jostle the incense–we swing it gently."[70] He remembers Father Crowley as the most inspiring person he had ever known other than his own father. Arthur finished high school at Death Valley and later became a forest ranger. He recalls that he was a member of the camp choir and that the Padre taught them four-part hymns that were sung on special occasions. Ted Goodwin reports that

the Padre occasionally conducted what today is called a non-denominational prayer service for all the CCC boys, as he felt sorry for them and called to serve all of them. No doubt if the Bishop had heard of it, the Padre would have received another reprimand. Arthur played taps at the Memorial service for the Padre held during Holy Week of 1940. He also remembers his commander was Commander Blight of whom the Padre wrote in the family guest book: "the two Blights that the CCC should not eradicate."[71]

9

DESERT LORE

The desert and its colorful culture provided endless inspiration for Inyokel's pen. On the topic of restaurants, Inyokel was enthusiastic. He included less elegant eating establishments than Furnace Creek Inn, but some more colorful and memorable:

> *May 9, 1937.* There is room for a monograph on desert restaurateurs and innkeepers, a "Saga of the Slingers." I have found few of them colorless, most of them ruggedly individualistic. Their attempts to soften the rigors of the wasteland for the footsore and hungry have changed their make-up into a strange alloy of homely philosophy, awkward kindliness, and awesome bluster. This last is largely for the tourist, who seeks atmosphere with his meals, far-fetched yarns for bedtime stories.
>
> I have sat at spattered counters served by one-eyed Chinamen, but their day is passing. They came to the desert in the era of gold and stayed to eke out a living in lean-to "cafes" and ranch boarding houses. Chinese cooks have a reputation for fine dishes, but those gentlemen never came to the mining camps. The old-time Celestial we knew was as dexterous with a can-opener as the rest of us, and perhaps a mite greasier. There were exceptions, but we did not look for them, for we were satisfied. And the price was always reasonable.
>
> I recall two inebriated gentlemen who had spent the night in their car in front of a Chinese eating house in Bridgeport because the local minion of the law had hidden the ignition key. He would not trust them to drive back over the perilous road to their mine, and what was the sense of trying to lock them up, so he hit upon this novel way of letting them sleep it off. At daybreak, they opened their eyes upon the main artery of the hill town and began to reconstruct the evening before. I sat in the lunch room as they sipped the rest of a quart of whisky, played with ham and eggs, and queried every newcomer as to whether or not he was the sheriff. That official, or the constable, finally appeared and told them their key was under the floor mat of the car. They then discussed the payment of their bill, the diminutive Chinese proprietor being in the kitchen out of earshot. It appeared that they had spent all their stake in riotous living the preceding night, and now

the bigger man, a huge hulk who had to bend over the stove like a question mark to warm himself, soberly asked the officer whether there was any penalty for killing a Chinaman. After a few minutes of this banter, he called out the owner and towering above him told him that he and his friend were broke and would like credit. The little Oriental took in the colossal figure, the remnants of the ham and eggs, and the nod of the constable in one glance and replied, "All light. You cashee check bimeby. You pay." I have no doubt he did, but I have often wondered whether I would be as successful in obtaining credit after I had consumed my order.

One night in Ludlow nearly two decades ago, I sat atop a stool in a tiny lunch dispensary beside Johnson, Scotty's partner, and asked the slant-eyed waiter whether he had any maple-nut ice cream. "Mebbe nut mebbe nut. slawbelly." This astonishing answer I later deciphered as "Maybe we have no maple-nut, but we have strawberry." At any rate, I ate strawberry.

Tom Garrity was one of the second-crop Irish, who had abandoned the muck-stick for the ladle and meat chopper, conducting a passable "eatery" in the rear of an old saloon at Randsburg during the silver boom. In fact the ancient bar served as the counter. Tom had a treasury of experience in the ways of metals and men, and served up some of it as garnishing with his viands. His oft-repeated greeeting for the Padre on his monthly visit to the town was, "I knew you were to be here this Sunday, Father. Several of the boys came in looking for change for a quarter."

Then there was Mrs. Kennedy's restaurant in Lone Pine in the early days of the century, featuring home cooking. The bill of fare was a sheet of ruled paper on which the dishes were written in pencil, but you seldom had a chance to read it. The waitress would spare you the trouble with her line, delivered at twice the speed of a radio news reporter, and in a crescendo forever reminding me of water rising in a rapidly filling bottle, "We have ros-bif-ros-lamb-ros-pork-bif-stew-want soup?" What could you say but "Yes?" And Jim Cowan's, on the flats near Haiwee, where you ate with the family, and meals were always on tap, and if you were fortunate you could have dove, venison, and bear at one sitting, as I did one raw winter night, while Jim spread out his ore samples on the tablecloth or excused himself to go out to quiet the stallion.

Or Brown's box-car cafe at Owenyo, where you changed from the broad-gauge to the narrow, and so did the mail and the produce, and you ate such ham and eggs as were never seen on land and sea, while billiken-built Brown made music with the triangle used for meal signals, or smiled like an old friend as you gave him your half-dollar at the door he had built into the abandoned railroad vehicle. Brown owned another such cafe at Brown, sixty miles below, where you could have breakfast or supper on the return trip, a real monopoly, and the only instance on record hereabouts. Now Brown and his chain of eating houses are no more, for Inyo visitors come hither by auto. But memories of genial hosts die slowly.

And another story from the town of Bishop:

May 23, 1937. Of course, the reason for my introducing the subject of innkeepers and restaurateurs a few weeks since was to acquaint you with John Rasin. But I came to the end of my tether before I could tell you about this six-foot Dalmatian, who, with his younger brother, Frank, manages to eke out a livelihood in their Bishop cafe. Restaurants in Bishop have risen in a blaze of glory, neon and otherwise, and flickered out, but the Rasins linger on. They divide the day into two ten-hour shifts, and, with a few faithful employees, keep their establishment open around the clock. I mention these things here only because their industry, like that of many of those born across the waves, puts to shame not a few favored sons of America who are both convinced that society owes them a living and that the same should be delivered at convenient hours and in suitable packages at their front door. To them I give John and Frank.

John's charm as a host rests in his air of naiveté. The tourist is scarcely seated at a table before a remark, addressed to him or her in person or to another for his benefit, conveys the impression that "poor ole John no spik the Eeengleese ver' well," and "you wouldn't try to fool a poor ole feller like John, would you?" which in the best Jack Benny manner, sets up the canny proprietor as a guileless and lovable soul. And puts the visitor in better appetite and etches Rasin Bros. Grill in his memory for future visits. I have known none who could resist a smile, weary though he was, when John sets a water glass before him with, "Have a drink, folks. This is on the house," or, "Drink, folks. We buy this water from Los Angeles."

Or at the counter an apparently serious argument will suddenly flare up, with John denouncing the manner in which the offending gentlemen and all his tribe "have ruined this country for White folks. Before you bohunks and Irishers came over here we had a fine country, but you fellers came, and now look at it. You ain't fit to associate with White folk." If he observes that the guests are interested, he frequently threatens to throw the other party out, announcing "I can lick Dempsey." This always registered in grand fashion until the evening that someone pointed to a husky diner in a booth and whispered, "Quiet, John, that IS Dempsey." It was.

Neither John nor Frank has ever married; in fact, they are inclined to be misogynists, and point to their restaurant experiences for excuse. But John is a courtly knight, and never fails to emphasize the fact that he is exhausting the capabilities of his establishment because of the ravishing beauty of a fair patroness. Which is also sauce for the pudding.

Yet there are silent sitters at his counter that few know of, or understand. They are the miners and sheepmen and stiffs who are down, temporarily or otherwise, on their luck. For them, there is always soup and more at Rasins', for the day may come when they can pay, or, if not, there was, in the boys'

way of looking at it, a day when they could. Seldom are the brothers defrauded. They cash checks without question for men whom they may not see for a year, they have had bills for meals that ran into hundreds of dollars. But they do not lose. They are men in a man's country. And they are godly enough in their gruff fashion never to send a man away hungry.

John has the gift of story telling, and his tale of acquiring his citizenship papers and that of his stay in jail are worthy of a larger audience. He likes a little fling at poker, and, on occasion long before he came to Bishop, the Los Angeles room in which he and some friends were playing a few social hands of cards was raided by the police and all the participants were transported to the calaboose. (It must have been around election time.) In the morning, the judge asked John if he were guilty. "No spik Eengleese, judge, I don't know what you mean. I'm just a poor foreigner here an' I find myself in jail." "What I want to know is, did you play cards or not? It is high time you foreigners learned the laws of this country." "Well, judge, I did play a few cards, but I don't want to go back to jail. I don't like the way they feed me. Their coffee–" "Enough," roared the court, "I fine you $10 or ten days in jail and order you to leave town immediately." "All right, judge," John answered meekly, and, reaching down in his sock, took out a roll of bills from which he peeled a ten-spot and laid it on the bench before the goggle-eyed jurist. "Where did you get that money?" "Oh, that! That's the $400 I won at poker, last night. Did you say ten, judge?"

Because of their nationality and perhaps of their Baptism, John and Frank were served notice in the Klan excitement that their presence here was not desired. But a clear and somewhat embellished statement of just what persuasion would be needed to move them, backed up by laying a loaded revolver on the showcase, seemed to remind the knights of the hood and sheet of urgent business elsewhere. Then there was the evening when a group of determined citizens seized a local resident who had been accused of acting as undercover man for Los Angeles at the time of the water fight and bustled him so forcefully out of one of John's booths that they wrecked several partitions. The gentleman has never returned, and the booths have been compensated for by parties unknown. But those days are happily past, and John has more pleasant recollections of friendly jousts. As when Dr. Boody, God rest him, and a few boisterous friends seized the struggling proprietor and poured table syrup inside his clothes, giving him a few unhappy moments before he could reach a bathtub. John would not admit that the incident had anything to do with an irate doctor's storming into the cafe a few nights later demanding to know "who put that fly-paper in the seat of my car?" said paper to be seen adhering on his stern in determined fashion. "Who? Me? Now, Doc, you wouldn't accuse an ole feller like me, would you? I no spik the Engleese ver' well." Yes, John deserves a niche in the desert's hall of fame, or, as the French have it, *faim*.

Inyokel was constantly on the lookout for stories that portrayed the wonderful hospitality of those who lived in the desert and who reached out to other desert dwellers, knowing that at times life could be precarious:

September 18, 1938. Jack Warner, who bosses a highway maintenance crew north of Red Rock Canyon and devotes his spare moments to beautifying his headquarters at Homestead Station with old wagon wheels, cactus, obsidian and kaleidoscopic ore specimens, has a story of an unusual Thanksgiving day. His daughters were both away, so he and his wife decided not to spend Thanksgiving at home, but rather to set out on an adventure in happiness, trusting to find someone with whom to share their feast. Over the Slate Range into Panamint Valley they bumped for some 70 miles, looking for a likely canyon, one that promised enough solitude to harbor such an anchorite as they sought. Finally they swung into Tuber Canyon, climbing its long wash to halt at the remnants of a once busy mine. A seedy individual slowly tipped his chair forward and came out to meet them. He was the caretaker, doing a little prospecting on the side to kill time. There was no accompanying invitation to enter his shack, however, and it was only when Mrs. Warner asked if she might use his stove to make coffee that the truth was told. He had been out of coffee for three weeks, and had lived on beans and flour for a much longer period. Two neighboring prospectors had gone to town about a month ago and had promised to bring supplies, but they had not wandered home yet. Mrs. Warner avers that he drank four cups of coffee before it had even boiled and leaned against the wall for support when she unwrapped roast chicken and set it on the table with other delicacies. "May I use a pie pan to warm up this mince pie?" "Hot mince pie?" He clutched at the table to steady himself -"Hot mince pie?" After he had overcome his fright and was about to yield the invitation to draw up his canned goods box and pitch in he gave his cat the rest of the can of milk he had been saving, now that the Warners had brought this new hoard. "No, but why not give him real cream off the top of the milk we brought?" asked the Mrs. "My gawsh, genuine cream! And I thought I wasn't gonna have no Thanksgivin'! Ye see, I thought yesterday was Thanksgivin' day."

The funeral of Harry Dolan was the occasion for recounting the fate of the mining town of Bodie:

November 18, 1936. The piles of hardpan were hidden in flowers, flowers from Los Angeles, 400 miles away; flowers from gardens all the way from Bridgeport to Cottonwood; flowers that came by mail, express, hearse, and truck, when we laid Harry Dolan in his native earth. He had stood here a few weeks ago by his mother's grave and asked that when his time came we

should bring him to the spot in which he had played as a child. So, we stood around as the Padre prayed, amid the fallen slabs, the weathered grave enclosures leaning at every angle, the wooden headboards whose painted inscriptions stood out in bas-relief from the sand-beaten surface. A new stone rose nearby, bearing the name of Dolan. We remembered Harry's brother, shot down by bad men at Mono a generation back, and we thought of Harry's other brother now sheriff in his place, weeping unashamed in this garden of memories. "May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed..." We turned back to Bodie, huddled in the vale below, and left Harry's body high on the hill, his soul with God.

Carl Nellen handed the holy water to the Padre. He used me as a holder for the long, chained incense burner. Censer, is it? Carl's thoughts and mine were traveling back to the retreat that he and Harry and I had made a month ago, perhaps the last time the censer was used, when Harry sang with us as the blessed smoke rose before the Lord in Benediction. Could Harry have foreseen that he would be the first of our 12 to go? Did he realize that his first retreat would be his last? We remembered his fervor, the hours he spent alone in reading and prayer, the help he sought from both the priests in gathering the knowledge his youth in this lonely mining town had denied him, and we wondered. It was Harry's turn to preach now, and Carl and I were good listeners.

The Catholic church in Bodie burned down about seven years ago. Tramps, undoubtedly, were responsible. There had been no resident pastor for years, but in its day it had known greatness, for it was here that Father Cashin, who died a few years ago at Santa Rosa, baptized and shrove and married and buried two generations. So we used the Miners' Union Hall for the funeral. Over the door I read, just as Mark Twain had read in his days here, "Miners' Union Hall, Dedicated Dec.23, 1877," and in a back room I found the old ledger of dues paid and meetings held. How like a roster of the A. O. H. that was! We dropped the curtain in front of the stage and found an old bar which we set up in front for an altar for the Padre. From the walls hung the massive mirrors taken from some old liquor dispensary, mirrors, which, if they could but give back to us the pictures they had once reflected, would baffle a thousand raconteurs. The gas jets projecting from the walls, the lace curtains suspended from wooden rings and rods before the windows– could this be California? The presence of Judge Parker in the congregation, Judge Pat who has made history in the Los Angeles courts, brought us back to reality. Yet Pat Parker was baptized in Bodie when the gas jets and the accordion clothes racks and the tin bathtub in the rooms behind the hall were new-fangled notions from the world beyond.

The fire that destroyed the heart of Bodie about four years since removed much of the most picturesque and historic of California's ghost town. Its isolation had prevented much of its relics from being removed by the ruthless souvenir hunter. But the improvement of the roads and particularly

the advent of movie companies spelled the stripping of Bodie of everything that could possibly be set in somebody's parlor or den and exhibited as a trophy of "When I was a bold, bad man in the wide open spaces." Only their size and incompatibility with the modern tempo account for the presence in Bodie today of a group of exhibits unparalleled even in California. These are, situated in a brick building hard by the graveyard, two horse-drawn hearses and about 40 babies' coffins. The Hollywood tourists hereabouts were not interested in hearses, and what on earth could they do with babies' coffins, unless, possibly, they could work one of them into Hollywood's coat-of-arms or something?

The hearses are in splendid condition with glass sides and a stream-lined seat for the driver, who probably wore a tall crepe-ribboned hat. The doors are elaborately festooned with gold and silver leaf, the floors painstakingly inlaid with fine parquetry, a picture of Leigh Hunt's "Behold I stand at the door and knock" gracing the front end of the interior of the old conveyance. Atop the newer vehicles are four handsomely carved wooden urns, on the other, black removable plumes. Do you recall when they used black plumes for an adult's funeral, white for children?

The little coffins are of the type no longer used, shaped to fit the shoulder, narrowing towards the foot. Most of them have inserted glass panels over the face, with a cap which would close the view after the relatives had looked for the last time at their little one. I was told that one fair visitor here took a casket top home for use as an ironing board. For her stiff laundry, I suppose–or would that be called irony? In a corner of the shed stood other grisly relics, stretchers, and even an unearthed coffin whose tenant had been transferred elsewhere, perhaps a Chinese shipped back to the Celestial Kingdom, as is the custom. And, odd sight in California too, a sled fashioned from skis and a coffin base to permit travel over the winter snows, for Bodie is 8,000 feet above the sea.

Nor was the day entirely lugubrious. Pat Dolan–Patricia to you, home from the university for her father's funeral, told me how she had followed another car from Bridgeport, the county seat, 18 miles away. The car ahead was carrying several boxes of flowers, and two of them slipped out of the rumble seat, and, dragging by a string, slid and bumped along the road as the driver raced on, oblivious to the situation. Pat's chauffeur speeded up to catch his predecessor, but the pace was too fast, and it was not until the flower-bearer happened to look back that the boxes were retrieved. "Going 70," I commented to Pat, "and carrying his own flowers. Not a bad idea."

Farther south of Bodie lay Mono Lake which merited its own column:

October 30, 1938. A study in contrasts are voyages over the water of Lake Mead, behind Boulder dam, and over Mono Lake, at the head of the Los

Angeles water system. One was impounded to store waste waters, to generate power, and eventually to provide an additional supply for domestic use in the great city of the Southland. The other natural reservoir is about to be dried up by the works of man, and the streams that feed it are to be diverted into the aqueduct leading to the same metropolis. For in a quarter of a century Mono Lake will be naught but a salt-bed, bleaching in the suns that now make it a mirror for America's most majestic snow-capped mountains. It is estimated that the inauguration of the Mono Tunnel addition to the Los Angeles water works next year will cause the lake level to drop three vertical feet per annum, and, while its average depth is over 80 feet engineers say that when the solution reaches a density of 19 percent solids the surface will cake over and evaporation proceed at a much more rapid pace. Both Mono and Owens Lakes will then be mute relics of the days of sky-blue waters, days before the White men came.

High on the skirts of the range above Tioga Lodge and Lee Vining you can see the old beach lines marking successive recessions and risings of the lake in prehistoric times, witnesses of dry and wet cycles. Since this inland sea has no outlet, these varying depths meant various degrees of salinity, and it is probable that fish once swam in its depths. Such is not the case today, and the only signs of life are the red-eyed grebe, the pin-tail, and other ducks that fleck the burnished steel of its bosom. Of course there are the millions of flies swarming along the shore, "*Ephydna hyans*," flies whose pupa formed a piece de resistance in the diet of the aborigines. The gathering of these delicacies, and the common use of the lake waters by all the tribes for its curative value, whether from Yosemite, Nevada, or Inyo, made the lake shore a recognized sanctuary. Here all warfare ceased, as at Obsidian mountain nearby, where warriors from every nation chipped arrowheads but used them not upon one another until they had stepped off the sacred ground.

Mono was the Indian word for "beautiful," and the titles the Red man gave to the two islands near its center are equally expressive. Paoha, the larger of the two, probably some ten miles in circumference, is noteworthy for the steam vents in the lava outcroppings along the shore, and Paoha means "Isle of the Mist." Negit island where nest the seagulls of whose eggs Mark Twain speaks in *Roughing It*, looks like a great bird with outstretched pinions. Whether for the gulls or its outline Negit is appropriate,"The Blue Goose." The Mono Indians used to gather the eggs regularly, and perhaps, like Clemens, cooked them in the boiling waters of Paoha. As I recall it, the humorist's comment was that "all that was needed on Paoha was an unaccommodating hotel clerk to make you feel perfectly at home."

About 15 years ago the McPhersons, who own and operate the Mono Inn on the lake shore, built a home on Paoha. A willow fence post they set at that time has now grown into a tree with an 80-foot spread, a conspicuous landmark as you approach the island from the west. They drilled for oil, and

at 2,600 feet struck hot water, a frequent fate of many who drill for oil, whether with rotary drills or stock certificates. This well furnished their domestic supply until they moved back to the mainland a few years later. Another industry initiated then was the raising of angora goats, which they freed on Paoha. But the vegetation was so sparse that it could support only a limited number, the rest dying off. Today their descendants (the goats) run wild over the headlands, and keen-eyed is he who can sight one.

A meadow on Paoha's shore, a spot now submerged because of the present wet cycle, served in Mark Twain's day to grow hay for the mules hauling timber from Mono mills to Bodie, famed old mining town in the hills to the north. It was in Bodie's sister camp, Aurora, that Mark spent much of his hectic newspaper cubdom. Later the mules were supplanted by a narrow-gauge railroad along the east bank. This transportation ceased with the decline of the mines, and the tracks were junked at the time of the World War. Today Mono is lonely, save for the launch, "Venita" run by Wally McPherson to convey tourists to Paoha, and for the speedboats that crease it during the annual Mark Twain regatta. Tomorrow–well, let us not speak of tomorrow.

It was Pat Parker, superior judge of Mono County, who assured me recently that fishing had become so poor up his way that the seagulls were chasing gophers.

Randsburg was once part of the Padre's extensive parish and he was especially interested in its early history. The following story carries us to Randsburg and thence to San Francisco, Bullfrog, Rhyolite, Skidoo and eventually back to Independence:

January 7, 1940. "The Anglo-American Corporation, leasing the famed Yellow Aster mine at Randsburg, planned to abandon its glory-hole lease on Jan. 1. On Dec. 1 the miners were on strike for recognition of their union. The corporation thereupon cancelled its lease as of Dec. 4." Thus runs an item in last week's *Inyo Register*. And thus does history repeat itself. How many remember when the miners at the Yellow Aster struck in 1903 for recognition of union demands and the company hired 300 "scabs" from Joplin, Mo. to take their places, and Randsburg became a gun-toting town which soon lost its place as a mining center never to rise again until Kelley and Williams found "The Big Silver?" There is a gentleman filling teeth behind a glass door in Independence, a door marked "Dr. Baxter, Dentist," who might still be in Randsburg if it were not for that strike at the Yellow Aster. But even a dentist of three years' experience has to live, and particularly after he has met such a charming school-teacher as Josie Fearon from Omaha, who has come to visit her aunt Mrs. Jim Montgomery and found a job behind the teacher's desk and a husband behind the dentist's chair. So, from a demoralized Randsburg, Clifford Baxter set forth for Matrimony and San

Francisco in one gesture.

But in 1906 nature decided to do some yanking of her own and dentists as well as others found things a little shaky that spring. In fact, it was as an anesthetist that the doctor felt he did the greatest service in San Francisco assisting in emergency operations after the earthquake and fire. Danger past, he thought of the boom at Goldfield and soon had his shop set up in that city of silver doorknobs and one-night opera stands. There was no harm, of course, in his running down to Bullfrog and Rhyolite to look things over when Shorty Harris put them on the map. After all, it is the bounden duty of a desert man to look over every wild prospect that he hears of, for, although he would not dignify the crazy assertions of the discoverer by pretending interest, it never hurts to lope over that way and stake out a claim or two, just in case. So in Bullfrog he lost $7,500 by holding out for a further climb in his stock, but he recouped in Rawhide when the claims he bought for $1,500 brought $12,000. "I started running and never looked back," he says. He stopped running at Skidoo, which had just gone into its stride. But Skidoo, alas, lived up to its name, and there came the hour when the doctor returned with his little family to his birthplace at Independence to confine his mining to drilling in molars and his "showings" to the bridgework on the mouth of a bore. There are vague whisperings of mysterious expeditions over the Inyos into Saline, and up Waucoba, and of canvas sacks brought back too weighted to be filled entirely with Paiutes' eye teeth, but who are we to ask? Who is there among us to cast the first stone? Nobody. We are all fearful lest another chap pick it up and have it assayed. No, Doc, keep right on prospectin', and, if you really hit something worth the packin', remember I knew you in Randsburg.

One thousand eight hundred dollars was the best fee he ever received for pulling a tooth, says the doctor. He had hardly been practicing a year when a miner came into his Randsburg office and told him he had suffered for days from a bad tooth. As the young dentist extracted the bothersome bone he observed that the patient's face was covered with pustules. The man admitted that he had not been feeling well, but was sure that after he had rested in the sun a while–he had just come from Arizona–he would be all right. So he went across the street and sat down on the wooden sidewalk. The dentist slipped out the back door and called Dr. MacDonald, who is still alive at Virginia City, and asserted his fears that his early morning visitor had smallpox. The medico pulled his trousers on and hastened out to examine the case. He promptly ordered the miner into confinement and wired Bakersfield health authorities, who, in turn, directed immediate quarantine. "You see, doctor," the physician lectured the dentist, "you should not have pulled that fellow's tooth. Now I'll have to quarantine you too." "I'll pull anybody's tooth if they are in pain, whether they have smallpox or not," was Baxter's retort. So together they burned formaldehyde candles in the dentist's office and Baxter had to submit to vaccination. It had no

effect. A few days later Dr. MacDonald vaccinated him again, but with no result. "Doctor," affirmed the physician, "you're going to be a valuable man to me. I do not understand why, but you are immune to smallpox." (Dr. Baxter thinks it was due to his having contracted "cow-pox" as a young man from milking in his father's dairy.) So the struggling dentist was appointed quarantine and fumigation officer by the board of health, for 300 cases of smallpox swept through the camp within a week. Eight hundred men in all came down with the odious disease, and for three months Baxter rode in his buggy from dugout to lean-to in a ceaseless round. For this he was paid $20 a day, or $1,800 for the tooth that proved his immunity.

The doctor's most unusual experience with a patient also had Randsburg as its locale. Within that town dwelt an enfant terrible whom we shall call Binner, a 13-year-old who informed his mother and all his classmates that when that dentist went to pull his aching tooth he was going to punch him in the jaw. The frightened parent forewarned the doctor of the threat, which accounts for the ensuing events. As the lad climbed into the chair Dr. Baxter was aware that the slope of the hill outside his window was covered with boys, boys who had come to see the downfall of their common enemy. He looked at the lad's tooth and reached for his forceps. As he turned his back he saw the boy doubling his fist in his lap, waiting for the precise moment to strike. But, alas, the doctor struck first, walloping the bully on the cheek with the flat of his hand. Binner yelled with pain, and as he screamed the forceps slipped into his open mouth and the cause of it all was yanked before he knew what had happened. Dr. Baxter recalls the taunts of the amazed gallery as they saw the biter bit, and he knew then that his Randsburg reputation had been established forever and a day.

And in another tale of Randsburg he wrote:

April 28, 1935. We were reminiscing, Max Skinner and I, about the days of the Randsburg boom, when all the town was laid out in tents. Max recalled the contract for the erection of a row of wooden buildings, and how the job of painting them was let to a painter named Buster. His competitor, one Irons, was so peeved at this that he waited until Buster had erected a scaffolding and had climbed thereon, when Irons promptly kicked out the supports, down coming Buster, paints and all. He hit the ground fighting, and when those who stood for a modicum of law and order got the contestants separated they were faced with the fact that there was but one cell in the town jail. They struck upon the expedient of having the two explain to the judge that it was all a joke, and thus avoided the unpleasant possibility of a first-class murder if the two had been locked up together.

We fell to speculating then on the safest place in case of gunplay, Max remembering that he had told a partner in Randsburg that the least

exposed position was to be stretched out on the ground. Acting on this theory they laid down side by side in an unfinished store front one night. In the course of the evening a quarrelsome gentleman dissected another in a saloon, whereupon the bartender pulled a rifle from under the bar, aimed at the offender and killed a slumbering miner across the street as he lay in his blankets on the floor. His intended victim hid in a piano box, which the riflemen proceeded to pepper, causing no greater damage, however, than the removal of the occupant's ear. Mrs. Jud Collins related to me at Bishop that her mother, Mrs. Woods, in the boom days of Goldfield, lived at Lida, which, too, was filled to the brim with prospectors. She asked a group of men to move a large range that stood outside her kitchen, and as they did so the door fell open, revealing a man crouched inside. He had hidden there to avoid being shot by someone whose feelings he had offended. Yet another in that town, similarly pursued, leaped into a well, but not before a low bullet had clipped off the heel of his boot. So the question of the safest spot in a melee is still unsettled.

To the west lies Red Rock Canyon with its varied history:

August 15, 1937. The report of the discovery of radium in Red Rock Canyon has, of course, resulted in the usual rush. I have not had a chance yet to visit "the strike," but even a casual stop at a cafe 50 miles away furnished me with the information that the "stuff" would run over $4,000 a ton, that the waitress had a sample of the ore, and that the service station attendant had been granted the special privilege of a trip down into the mine on the following day, a piece of news which he in no way tried to conceal and which made him a man apart from the rest of us common folk. Last week, he would have considered you crazy if you had asked him to bother looking at any of the thousand prospect holes near his establishment. Isn't life like that?

Red Rock is a sublime setting for such hectic happenings as a radium rush. Its weirdly eroded sandstone and clay cliffs have looked down upon tent cities before and have echoed to the sounds of revelry by night. Time was in Red Rock when nuggets could be gathered by the pint if you knew where to look, and it is not a score of years since the last placer workings ceased to function. Deep in its sculptured walls lie buried fossils of the saber-tooth tiger and other monsters. Scientists have unearthed many of them. I know where there are splendid specimens in wayside museums and God alone knows what stores of them and other marvels lie in the myriad canyons branching from the great gash which the highway follows. Petrified wood abounds, and a whole forest of it stands a few miles north.

Dove Springs, near the upper end of the main canyon, on the old "Jawbone" Canyon road, furnishes sweet potable water, but woe betide the innocent who partakes of the stream that slips softly along the desert floor

on ordinary days and becomes a roaring yellow tide after spouts and rainstorms. For it is powerful medicine, and a favorite trick of drivers and tricksters in stage-coach days was to prevail upon some parched tenderfoot to refresh himself at this innocuous-appearing brook. Five miles below this water disappears in a salt lake, whose depths are so briny that objects suspended therein quickly become covered with crystals to the depth of an inch or more, like the old rock candy we used to take for colds. Yet, close by this lake are inexhaustible supplies of pure well water, whence the Southern Pacific draws replenishment for its tanks on this division, and whence the town of Randsburg pumps its water for many uphill miles. Here, at Cantil, will rise the town that radium will build, if the mine proves to be all that present assays indicate, for here are water, railroad and highway.

Down this fantastic gorge in the first days of 1850 trudged two weary travelers, Manly and Rogers, who had left their companions starving on the floor of Death Valley and had struggled across the Panamint and Slate Ranges on their trek for help. Manly describes this as "Red Canyon," and relates their joy at finding the good water at the present Cantil. As far as history reveals, they were the first White men ever to pass this way.

Johnny Mills once told me of how another White man passed through Red Rock. A miner–name now forgotten, but the curious can find it in the Kern County records–dropped in at a Randsburg Chinese restaurant late one night and demanded something to eat. The Oriental proprietor, perhaps for reasons of long standing, replied by slapping the visitor across the face with a dish towel. For this he was promptly dispatched with a bullet, and the would-be customer set out across the waste. The search was thorough, but he slipped through the meshes of the law and found his way to Havilah, near Bakersfield, where he appealed for aid to one Clem Dougherty, a rancher, who was himself no man to be lightly crossed. Dougherty concealed the culprit in a load of hay and he and Johnny drove the wagon right down through Red Rock, under the sheriff's very eyes, all the way to Daggett, where the gunman took train for the East.

When Los Angeles reached up into Inyo for its water supply, the route of the aqueduct cut across the upper end of Red Rock. Today, the conduit arrives here as a concrete-lined and covered trench, then becomes a great steel snake undulating down into Jawbone and up the other wall, where it disappears in a mountain cavern. The new radium find is actually reached by following the "ditch-rider's road," built by the City to enable its patrolman to inspect the aqueduct.

So there is food for much thought in these chiseled scarps. In prehistoric days, great beasts roamed dark forest aisles where now but petrified stumps, a mosaic of bones, and poisoned pools bear witness to a once luxuriant life. Down this sandy wash stumbled brave men who had left the East to seek gold in California and who, even if they had known of the nuggets underfoot, would gladly have traded them all for a few bags of beans that they

could carry back to their suffering companions in Death Valley. Here, men fought and cursed over gold and passed by this fabulous wealth that now appears from behind the curtain, for they knew neither its name nor its uses. And across its arid bosom the metropolis of the West leads her life-stream, which spells gold in the thirsting city, gold which will return here to develop this new wealth. And after all these things pass away, Red Rock will still be an enchanted land in the light of the moon, with its buried cities, its ghostly fanes, its crouching beasts from fancy's realm. Perhaps the moonlight brings the more lasting riches. *Quien sabe*?

Nearby Owens Lake was once a source of other minerals:

April 11, 1937. The extraordinary rains of this winter have brought Owens Lake to its highest level since the river was diverted into the Los Angeles aqueduct a quarter of a century ago. Its glassy surface, in marked contrast to the grey soda ash that customarily greets you, reflects the snows of the Telescope, eastward a hundred miles, and the ermined Sierra to the west. Bitter though its depths may be with potash and soda, there is no gainsaying the beauty on its face. This is true also for the roadside puddles left by the storms, and I have frequently lifted my foot from the throttle as I beheld in an adobe-lined pool a vision of "snowy summits, old in story." Even as man himself, here mire may mirror majesty.

Owens Lake is deserving of a column, nay, several. Its history, even in recorded time, is the story of mankind, of heroic deeds, of greed and treachery. Around its shores the forty-niners stumbled after escaping from Death Valley, bound for the gold fields, while one of California's richest deposits of mineral wealth lay in plain sight on the hills above. Into its saline depths the White men later drove the Indians in the greatest massacre of a long and bloody war. Into its depths once slid a boatload of bullion from Cerro Gordo, piled high on the deck in 80-pound bars. Upon its banks still stand the great beehives of charcoal kilns, built to burn the pines from Cottonwood into fuel for the smelters at Swansea, across the lake. At Swansea, the line of the old pier may still be traced by the ridge of ore and ballast that fell from it in the old days. Today, the nearest water is two miles distant. Upon its rim, or where the waves once lapped, two huge extraction plants puff away, filching from the residue of the ages of evaporation the fortunes in soda that our forebears never dreamed of, while high up above its western marge a concrete-lined ditch bears to the City of the Angels the water from the Sierra's snows that once made this the second body of water in California. Some day soon, I shall tell you more of this treasure-house, and of how its wealth finds its way into the glass through which the light filters for your morning paper, of which it also forms part, and dances on the steel blade of your knife, fluxed with soda ash and washed with soap powder whose chief

ingredients are shipped from here, while you sip your sal hepatica and sodium bicarbonate–it is a fascinating story, and deserving of a day of its own.

Another mineral from Owens Lake was borax, as he discovered from a visiting Jesuit:

August 21, 1938. Two weeks ago it was boats and canoes. Now it is retorts and test tubes and vats. I wish the Padre wouldn't read so much, or meet so many disturbing people. Forgive me if all this sounds disconnected and aimless. What I am getting at is that a little while back our pastor was agog over the chance of having a few young men condemned to church attendance, a la Santa Cruz, and was discussing the loan of a boat for the purpose of bait. But since he met a certain Jesuit, a former professor of chemistry at a California university, he is gibbering about tetrahydrates and waters of crystallization. It appears that the learned gentlemen told him that way back in the days of the World War he had been engaged in the chemical warfare division of the army, and had been assigned to the study of the mineral deposits of Owens Lake, among other things. He informed the Padre that there were 7 million tons of borax in the lake, which at war prices would have sold for $20 a ton, lakeside. More, he confided to our struggling shepherd that he had checked on a formula, later sold to an international concern, for the extraction of the borax from the other constituents of the lake, and that, from the several hundred thousand dollars paid for the secret, he, the Jesuit, had received $5,000 for his part. "Imagine, Inyokel," stammers the Padre as he empties a beaker into the sink and begins the compounding of another formula. "Imagine! Five thousand dollars out of my parish, and just for telling them something about Owens Lake! And I eat–yes eat, Owens Lake, when the sandstorms come, and what do I get? I ask you. What do I..."And so far, far into the night.

Not far from Lone Pine was the small settlement of Owenyo:

July 9, 1939. There are in this wide world few spots half so desolate as the east side of Owens Valley near Owenyo. "Owenyo" was coined from the names of the valley and county that mark the junction of the old narrow-gauge railroad from Nevada and the new broad-gauge that Los Angeles built to haul its aqueduct construction material from Mojave. Today, as when it began, Owenyo is a huddle of discarded boxcars, the only building planned for its present use being the combination station and rooming house. The most elegant mansion is an old bridge builder's car transported here from Mojave and now, with a lean-to porch, serving as the "coolest house in town" for the chief mechanic. There are no electricity, no gas, no green or growing thing except a few spectral tamarisks and the dusty sage. Here in a frying

sun the men folk don gas masks and shovel soda ash from narrow-gauge to broad-gauge cars, or in the fall transfer sacks of potatoes southward bound from the fields at Big Pine. Were it not for the green fields and the stores and the movies at Lone Pine, eight miles away, the exiles of Owenyo, men, women, and children, would go stark, raving mad.

A league or so to the south a quadrangle of tamarisk and a string of cars on a siding locate "Mt. Whitney," the original station for Lone Pine. A sand-filled ditch shows where someone tried to lead the waters of the river this way. A tawny ribbon of road dangles out of a canyon from the Keynot, which was a mine when you and I were young. But not a house nor a human do you see until you have bounced through adobe dust for another ten miles to a spur marked Dolomite, and you have followed it to the snuff-colored and wrinkled flank of the Inyo range. Here two families alone remain of the score that once found employment quarrying marble from the mountainside and shipping it to the soda plant at Keeler to be burned in the mill. Marble from here found its way into San Francisco skyscrapers in palmier days, and a mottled piece of it serves as an altar stone in the chapel car of the Diocese of Monterey-Fresno. These unpainted shacks, their gables lifted and a bamboo screen or two draped across their porches, once became a Chinese village for *Oil for the Lamps of China*, and from here Pat O'Brien pointed out the rugged Sierra through the arch of an ox-cart to Josephine Hutchinson and exclaimed, "we have a glorious backyard!"

Occasionally yet the crusher runs, grinding marble into fragments to be shipped to the city. Here you can find sacks of granulated black, blue, gray, ochre, and white marble, destined for the makers of terrazzo floors. The white gravel also finds its way into the driveways of service stations, while the yellowish-hued granules are mixed, of all things, with chicken feed! Which reminds me that Glenn Keep says that the soda plant sells much bicarbonate to poultry growers to keep the hens from foul manners. Beside the crusher stands piles of red and grey slate, which is pulverized and spread on tar paper for roofing purposes. There is more in these dirty, streaked hills than meets the eye. Not far from the quarry stands the abandoned salt mill, with its rusted tramway and pendant buckets black against the bluest of skies. Here White Smith spent a million on a dream of wealth from the salt lake in hidden Saline Valley, 14 miles to the east. A couple of families find cheap lodging here, one of them being that of the caretaker, R.B. McIlroy. It is McIlroy who owns the red and the grey and the green slate quarry to the south and who sells it to the roof-makers, or to the lawn-makers who desire fancy stepping stones. It is he, too, who owns a gold mine in Panamint, with silver and lead mixed in. Back of his house by the salt tram a green patch clings to the barren hill, the mouth of a talc blow-out, as yet too full of lime to be profitable. And above the talc a creamy streak shows where asbestos lies, of such fibre that the Johns-Manville Company has sent an investigator here to examine it. Last Christmas the McIlroys had the most unique Christ-

mas tree I have seen, a desert holly bush hung with asbestos fibres for snow. The only other suitable shrub on this alkali slope would have been the mesquite tree that stands alone in the salt grass, the sole specimen of its kind in Owens Valley. McIlroy's home stands 50 feet below the level of the old beach line of the lake, yet from his stoop it is two miles across the drifting sand to the bitter waters of the present sump. It is a bleak landscape, until your eyes reach the Sierra. Then you envy McIlroy, not for his salt or his gold or his talc or his slate or his asbestos, but because he can sit on his warped and weathered piazza and gaze on the Sierra Nevada from the finest vantage point on earth.

The sun rises behind you, and, like a brush tipped with gold leaf, gilds the tips of the ragged range that rims your world. By some strange alchemy the summits grow roseate and glow while enveloping canyons still slumber in darkness, like embers in a bed of coals. Then the flame spreads, and down the slope night rolls off, a dark robe sliding to the valley floor. All day long the play goes on, under ever-changing clouds and the deepening lavender dyes of a desert afternoon. But when the wheeling orb of day has swung behind America's western wall you will understand why those who dwell by marble hills and salt lakes and in railroad boxcars need not envy those who live in the palaces of kings. Sunsets as the coast country knows them are rare, for clouds are few and the mountains high. But the silver fringe that tops the barrier the instant the sun vanishes seems to separate earth and sky. It is as if the range had slipped down out of the blue a thousand feet or so, carrying part of the sky with it, revealing the silver lining. But slowly the void fills up, the azure deepens into indigo, the third dimension disappears, and a 100-mile sable silhouette limns the land to which sleep has come, shutting the door for the night upon the westering hot-blooded Apollo. Lucky McIlroy.

Inyokel had his critics, and one of them chided him on the above column. He gave her equal time:

July 16, 1939. Mrs. Ted Strong of Owenyo who owns a big car and can whisk to Lone Pine in 12 minutes, and who has lived in Owenyo for 19 years, thinks I made out too poor a case for that hamlet last week . She was waiting for me, paper in hand, when I drove over on Saturday with the boxcar contingent from the Padre's vacation school. "Have you a minute?" she smiled disarmingly, and I admitted I had. "I want to show you some of the better side of our town, so that you won't think we are quite so badly off." So it came about that I was told that Owenyo had a post office and a branch of the county library. I gathered that Mrs. Strong and her husband conducted both these emporia of the better life, as they appear capable of doing. And she led me "across the tracks" to a better land, where the converted railroad car dwellings were yellow instead of red, and flowers bloomed. I saw a sun-

flower whose neck muscles were extraordinarily developed, for at Owenyo sunless days are as scarce as an All Year Club ad. And there were petunias and snapdragons in a two-by-eight garden, watered from the high tank which is in turn pumped full from the tank car hauled 12 miles from the spring at Diaz siding. And, in a pool about the size of a card table, Mrs. Strong pointed out some goldfish. Then the school, another discarded and de-wheeled railroad coach, now closed for the summer. I bowed in acknowledgement of these evidences of culture. The goldfish were unanswerable.

Before returning to the intriguing goldfish, a passing thought about the school. Mrs.Spainhower, who has taught there for some time, should have little trouble with geography lessons in that setting. How easy to call out from her desk: "You are now traversing the Owens Valley, whence Los Angeles draws its water supply. The range on your right is the Sierra Nevada, the highest in the United States. This train for Mojave, Los Angeles, Tucumcari, New Orleans, Washington and all points east!!! And as for "reading, writing, and 'rithmetic,"–everybody knows there are three r's in a "railroad car."

But those goldfish! I wonder whether they have even an inkling of their importance in the scheme of life at Owenyo! In themselves they show forth the glory of God and the urge of man for beauty, for in their present coloration they represent centuries of cross-breeding since they left their ancestral home in China, where they were olive green and first cousins to the common carp. At Owenyo they are, as my guide pointed out, the chocolate coating for the pill, the brass buttons on the drab. But do they dream that the same God who made them, and China, set a course for the Japanese current whence His sun draws water for the clouds that spill down the Sierra and replenish the spring near Diaz siding, from which the Southern Pacific pumps water and hauls it with a steam-driven locomotive 12 miles to pump it into the supply tank to be drawn forth for Owenyo's glittering coterie? Or that they swim by courtesy of the Southern Pacific Railroad, with permission of the Interstate Commerce Commission? Or that a mile away their dowdy country cousins, the carp, wallow in the vestigial pools of the Owens River, despised and forgotten, while these glamour girls of the fish family flick the lily pads in Owenyo's aquacade?

The Owenyo youngsters like to fish for catfish in the river, but detest the carp because of its poor food value. Yet, as I pointed out to them one morning driving over for class, there is a way of cooking carp which renders its bony cadaver quite palatable. I give it here, even if this is not the domestic science department, because there may be other readers who dwell by carp-filled streams."Take a large carp and slit it down the center of the belly. Clean and fasten the fish spread-eagle fashion on a board such as used for planked steaks. Season with salt, pepper, and other condiments as desired, then bake in a slow oven for an hour. Withdraw, set aside to cool slightly, and remove from board. Then throw away the carp and eat the board."

Farther down the line is Keeler. The Padre wove a tale of Christmas in the small town with the story of its mineral resources and its subsequent tribulations:

> *February 6, 1938.* The Wise Men are still offering their gifts to the Infant in the crib at Keeler. It is a little late for them to be staying around, as such things go, but then Keeler is removed from the main stream of events, and nobody complains, so they remain at their post. The Padre does not get over to St. Ann's more than once in a fortnight, and since he was not able to ask the shepherds to give place to the Kings until a week after Epiphany, it would have been hardly fair to the beady-eyed Martinez lads or the gurgling Senteno lassie or even to buxom Luisa Perez to wrap up the Bambino in His newspaper blanket for another year, or to shelve Los Reyes until the desert holly spatters the lava slopes next December. After all, camels come to Keeler but seldom.
>
> It must be cold in St. Ann's these blustery days, when the vagrant winds from the Shoshone country and the storm messengers from the distant gulf meet and dance along the lake shore. They whistle in through the sun-shrunk window stops and by the cardboard-stuffed gaps, where glass has rattled loose from the encircling leads. The lights were never very snug anyway, for the windows had originally graced some mansion of the gay nineties and had lain long in a second-hand dealer's yard before being whisked to the banks of Owens Lake to cajole the sun into clothing chocolate-skinned Mexicans in fairy diadems and Joseph's coats. The tiny stove inside the rail, close beside the statue of Our Lady of Perpetual Help selected by a former pastor from a catalog as being the nearest likeness to Our Lady of Guadalupe, does not help matters much. And anyhow the wood-box is being used for the crib–you never would have known it with its rock-paper camouflage–so the Magi just pull their ermine closer and attend to the business at hand, the adoration of their Lord. Perhaps they are more at home than we think, for did they not come from a land where they were lone worshippers of the truth and follow His star through leagues on leagues of sand? The alkali sifting through the cracks and forming in ridges on the sills must have been the breath of their nostrils as they rocked over the desert on the backs of their dusty camels. And one of the staring five-year-olds at the altar rail last Saturday was called Reyes.
>
> I wonder if the roar of the talc mill next door bothers them much? Its deep-bellied "Fee, Fi, Fo, Fum, I'll grind his bones to make my bread," as it engulfs ton after ton of talc and crushes it into the finest talcum for fair ladies and for gentlemen who care for such stuff, must have grown familiar, for they lift not their eyes for a moment. Even a little of the powder floating in and settling on their crowns does not distract them. These chaps have certainly mastered the art of concentration. They must have, or else they

would have lost their star long before they braved the wrath of Herod for further direction. Why should a handful of talcum bother them now that they have found Him? Why, they are even giving Him their incense!

While I have never slipped back at night to observe them, I am sure that I would never catch one of them standing on a pew back and peering through a broken pane to see whether the water had risen in the lake so that the soda plant would have to stop pumping. Somehow, I feel that even material affairs would not draw them away from their task.

Nearly 25 years ago the Natural Soda Products Company sought to have the city of Los Angeles restrained from purchasing more lands along the Owens River and thereby endangering the flow of water into the lake, water which the company felt was necessary for the profitable pursuit of its business of extraction of caustic soda and sodium bicarbonate. But the City managed to continue its purchases until Owens Lake became, to the eye, as dry as Death Valley. In the years since then, the new owners of the soda plant have developed a process of extraction which requires a much denser solution, and hence they are now suing Los Angeles for nearly a quarter of a million dollars damages claimed to have resulted in the past two years from the City's having opened its spillways on the aqueduct for purposes of repairs, the water thus reaching the lake and forcing the soda plant to suspend operations. Thus in Inyo those who want the water, the citizens, cannot buy it; the owner, the city of Los Angeles, does not want it, the owners of the soda plant, get it. But the fuss does not seem to perturb these Wise Men at all. It is possible that, in the researches which led them to look for an Emmanuel, they discovered that water and lakes and cities are not half so important as their Maker. If in a few million years the mountains have melted and filled a lake bottom with minerals, it will only be a matter of a few million years before even the dry lake can blow away. But God will always remain. These Wise Men were not so dumb, after all.

Some time later he received a letter from the previously mentioned McIlroy which he used to emphasize the effect that the austere desert beauty may have on some of its residents:

> *December 17, 1939.* I knew that the vista of the Sierra from his veranda would get McIlroy sooner, or later. No man could watch those bastions of beauty by night and by day, under the fiery glow of the leaping sun, the trailing tulle of a lavender afternoon, or the dripping moon of a January night, and not break forth in song. Or die trying. Writes he this very day: "A man must be a man to battle the long stretches of what is a worthless, barren waste, to most travelers who traverse this section seeing only the gloomy side of it, as a place to be dreaded and hurried through without a lingering thought of its real beauty and spiritual inspiration to be gleaned from it at every curve of

the highways which traverse this empire which is rich beyond the most fantastic of imaginations in mineral wealth, which is so insignificant in itself when compared to the thrills that fervent thinking men of your type glean from the ever-changing vistage, as you roll on mile after mile, over the so-called lonely roads but to you and to men and women of kindred mind these roads are not lonely and nor are we, even though we are not accompanied by another person, are not alone, for the Great Supervisor and Caretaker of this realm is ever present in His supreme Majesty in this land of wonders, and as panorama after panorama unfolds one's thoughts are placed upon higher planes, and the thought comes to us, peace be still and behold the land of God, for I am the Creator of All... Tell the Padre that I have just read about the Death Valley Memorial Chapel, and although we are not of your faith I shall donate all the snow-white dolomite, or marble from these cliffs that he wants, and slate of as many colors as Joseph's coat for this building and the grounds surrounding it." Thanks, Mac, and the Padre murmurs, "Amen." Even reading your sentences leaves me breathless, but that is the way this landscape affects one. Leaping from peak to peak would wind a chamois, and Mac and I are no longer gazelles. Right you are about our loneliness. The finger of God is on the unfinished crags, His voice in the sleeping silences, His shadow in the canyons and His footprints on the spreading sage. We are not alone.

The talc processing industry prompted the following column:

March 10. 1940. To get back to this canyon business we were discussing a few weeks since: I refer to the joy of the chase, the stalking of a story up narrowing walls to its den; the ferreting out of its elusive length until it lies, pulsing and pathetic in the noonday sun. And remember I said "Any canyon" as if you were to turn off the oiled road above the rolling hills at the sign marked "Saline Valley" and veer to the right towards the grey gash in the chocolate-crested horizon. The gash is a talc mine, a rip in the earth's cloak, revealing the silver lining, and the decomposed granite road needs little more attention than the pounding it receives from the huge dump-trucks that haul the ore from the mine to the mill at Keeler, 17 miles away. At Keeler the slithery lumps will be poured into a hopper and come forth, save for the coal tar perfumes that will be added by the cosmeticians, as the powder that baffles reflection and is usually administered when mortals cry, "Aye, there's the rub!"

A dip or two, a curve or so, and your road winds up the V of a wash. Joshuas appear on either side, big inverted brooms with little left but the handle. Or Bali dancers angling out of the wings for an encore, or green Sivas pointing braceleted arms to heaven, earth and hell. You pass one talc mine and half a hundred prospect holes, loose threads on the mountain's

seams, and stop at the foot of the dump that marks the mouth of the tunnel. Light your carbide lamp–it matters little whether its reflector is rusted or not, as the walls of the bore are dead-white–and walk between the rails of the little railway into the heart of the hill. Lift your lamp or rub your finger–or your nose–along the wall or ceiling. Above and below and all around you is talc. You are buried in a pyramid of soapstone, and you gasp as you see 8-by-8 timber pillars beginning to buckle under the weight of millions of tons of cosmetics over your head. How many dabs of the powder puffs of the world, how many hours before the mirror, how much good for humanity because of the softening of the "five o'clock shadow" or the additional layer of "allure" lies between you and the sky is a problem to whet the appetite of a statistician. Or a moralist. I must try to run a bus load of these gentlemen up here some time.

Be careful coming down hill to the weatherbeaten cabin of the caretaker. Talc polishes the soles of your shoes while it destroys their shine, and men–and others–have been known to sit down hard in a cloud. The little tyke toddling on the porch is Frank Pedneau, which is his father's name also. But the lifted corners of his eyes are his mother's, for before she met the CCC boy from Louisiana, her name was Bessie Kong, whose parents were both either through Hawaii or directly, from the Celestial Kingdom. When I called, Bessie had one boarder, old John Taggart, one of the miners who slept in his hut close by, and this Irishman from Armagh and the French lad from the bayous and the sloe-eyed girl from the Orient were as happy as, nay happier than, most of the rest of America. For here they had work and faith and love, blue skies overhead, and three chickens in the pot. Frank had shot them that afternoon for the occasion, this being the only game available save an occasional over-curious coyote. He told me they fed the chickens with the scraps from the table, and, since on this afternoon at least the scraps would be largely chicken bones, I had a vague feeling that these three and little Frankie had solved their economic problems as well by elimination of the middleman and the practical application of perpetual motion. Chicken to table to chicken! What were Hoover and Roosevelt thinking of?

I am sure some wag among my readers will have long since soliloquized, "What a spot for a beauty shop!" But he will have been too late. Bessie took a course in beauty shopping after her graduation from high school in Lone Pine, and relinquished her work there only when Frank looked into her eyes, or she into his–or however it was. But even amid the sage–or perhaps even more amid the sage–men are men and women make up to them, so the ladies from Darwin and Panamint have beaten a trail to Bessie's door. What are 20 miles across the sands when you need a permanent, or what is battling a 50-mile gale in a flivver when the Legion dance demands a wave? So Frank digs talc and Bessie waves and pats on talc, and John Taggart wets his whistle a bit occasionally to take the talc out of his throat so he can rap out, "Brave Phelim Brady, the Bard of Armagh." And little Frankie slides down

the talc dump, trailing clouds of glory, unaware that he is an exclamation point in the American scene.

It was some of this talc that Will Reid, who manages the mine and shuttles back and forth to his resort in Panamint Valley, had on hand when Jack McMahon shuffled into Panamint Springs one spring day in 1938. Jack had begun life in Pittsburg, and from scene painting he had found his way into Hollywood as a prop maker, and finally to the road. His racking cough told us, and he knew it too, that his days were short, and he was trying to reach his sister's home in San Joaquin before he collapsed.

During the few days he rested behind Will's menage he endeavored to repay for his meals by carving figures from talc with his pocket-knife–cats and dogs and coyotes. But his specialty was "Venus Emerging from the Waves," or from her costume–at any rate she had mostly emerged in each instance. The Padre paused to chat with Jack of a warm afternoon, and before he left the wandering sculptor had offered him one of his soapstone ladies. "Nay, nay, Jack. Thanks just the same. I am afraid my visitors wouldn't understand that the lady wasn't as hard as she looked. They wouldn't know she was just talc!" He returned a week later and was told by Mrs. Reid that Jack had gone over the hill, probably to die. But he had left, and it stands on the parish desk today, a crudely beautiful crucifix for the Padre, a soapstone Christ. May the Good Lord who made the talc, and Jack McMahon, sprinkle the talc of His mercy on Jack's bruised soul, that his going to Him may not be too rough.

He extolled one of the stalwart desert women, and once did a bit of sleuthing for her:

February13, 1938. "Died in San Jose, of natural causes, Mrs. Simons Ryan Harrington. Funeral Mass at..." I wonder if there were not some story-hungry reporters who glanced at that item in San Jose papers this month and passed on to the traffic accidents or the society notes in search of an item for a human interest tale. Yet that line rang of romance, for its every word summed up a chapter in the career of one of Inyo's most picturesque characters. Simons, her first husband, had been killed by a railroad train, leaving her with three children, two boys and a girl. When her marriage to Ryan, a miner, brought her to Inyo, she transported the children across Death Valley in August by placing them in empty water barrels aboard a freight wagon and by driving the team herself. The son of her daughter, Susie, attended the recent Mt. Whitney-Death Valley Highway dedication. Her son Henry, was at her bedside in San Jose. But the other lad, now a Jesuit priest in the Chinese missions, learned of her death within an hour by a short wave message from one of his confreres at Alma, who succeeded in reaching the Jesuit observatory at Sikawei. The message was first intercepted by the

Japanese, but the sender told them he had no desire to use them as his agents, and he finally received an acknowledgment from Father Simon himself.

When I first met Mrs. Ryan, she was working the Estelle mine up back of Cerro Gordo, living with Marie and Henry in a lonely cabin 8,000 feet above the sea. I well recall the morning the Padre, after being awakened frequently in the night by coyote carols and garbage-snooping wild burros, rounded up all hands for Confession and set up an altar for Mass and Communion. Marie was the daughter of her marriage with Ryan, but that gentleman had slipped out of the picture long since. She always claimed that he was a close relative of Thomas Fortune Ryan, and, in fact, told me that she had once sent Marie back to New York to present her credentials, but that she had met with a cool reception. It was I who, browsing through a Randsburg paper, discovered the description of the body of a man found dead on the desert near Death Valley, a man whom some thought might have been named Ryan. I asked Mrs. Ryan if it could be possible that this was her husband, and, while she was reluctant to believe it, she gave me permission to investigate. The gold watch found on the corpse convinced her that she was a widow again. Later, she married Harrington, who had been her mining foreman for years, and they finally moved to San Jose, abandoning their Inyo interests.

Water is scarce at Cerro Gordo, and there have been bitter and bloody quarrels on the hill about the ownership of the springs. Mrs. Ryan's sex did not exempt her from attempts at claim-jumping or appropriation of her water-right, and it was only after she had proved her ability to shoot straight and her willingness to sit up all night with a rifle across her knees to defend her property that marauders made up their minds to leave the "Silver Queen," as she came to be known, severely alone. I think some Japanese sentries must have been shocked out of their wonted immobility of feature by Father Simon's indifference to loaded guns and the rattle of bullets. Nor would they understand, probably, if he were to tell them that he was raised in Death Valley and Cerro Gordo, over in Inyo county. Only those who know Inyo and who knew his mother can understand. Now that her struggle is over, we join with her priest son in asking God's mercy upon her soul. For she was a woman whom the treachery of men and the austerities of the wasteland hardened into the manner of a man, but only because beneath that shell there burned fiercely the love of a Christian mother. Mrs. Simons Ryan Harrington was pure high grade, which means that much of her refining was done here below.

Another resident of Cerro Gordo was Tom Boland:

June 4, 1939. My mention of Tom Boland a few weeks ago proved to be the "open sesame" to a whole storehouse of Cerro Gordo and Keeler reminis-

cences. Perhaps from time to time I shall find room to wedge one of them in the chinks of this dry wall of words. As, for instance, that Mrs. Emma Romero relates of the days when she cooked at the old Farrington place, which yet stands in the cleft of Cerro Gordo. It was run by Henry Boland, a brother of Tom, and Tom occupied a room on the second floor. He habitually went to bed in the dark until the night he discovered a form of a woman between the sheets. With a bound and a yell he leaped from his "cell" and demanded of Mrs. Romero, who, with other conspirators, sat up waiting for his appearance, whether they had rented his room to anyone. It was a little while before he could be coaxed to re-enter and remove the dummy, and never again did he essay retiring without a light.

Tom, in turn, became the author of a more elaborate joke, which had a sad prolog. In an argument over election laws on the hill, one Crapo, a French-Canadian of fair education, shot and killed Henry Boland and wounded two others, a man and a boy. He escaped and was never apprehended, although the murder at Cripple Creek some years later of the miner who had recovered from the Cerro Gordo fracas was also laid at Crapo's door. Tom Boland spent a good sum of money in trying to locate his brother's murderer, and felt justified in claiming Crapo's house in Cerro Gordo by way of damages. But he had reckoned without Frank Winkler.

Frank Winkler, a huge hulk of a Dutchman, had lost his eye in a steel mill in Southern California before striking out for the mines. He had made a killing down there with a successful invention, but had been swindled out of his rights. This was not difficult, for Frank was a trusting soul, and soon became the butt of many a jest. He was convinced that Bill (Goldtooth) Miller was possessed, for had he not made Frank's watch run while he held it in his hand, whereas it refused to function when its owner took it back? Poor Frank did not notice that Bill held the watch stem down, and returned it stem up. And when Bill had tipped off a couple of lads to race up the narrow-gauge beside a freight train and stop at the sixth car and run back he bet Winkler that the runners would turn at exactly that point. "How do you know?" "I keep a bunch of devils in my trunk and they do everything I want." When the messengers reversed their direction at the designated spot, Frank said "Good-by" to Goldtooth forever.

All supplies for Cerro Gordo had to be hauled up by mule wagons or buckboards. Frank came home from his shaft one day to look for the shoes he had ordered, and found the huge footwear already unwrapped and resting on the ground behind the buckboard, to which they were fastened. "We had to tie them on behind and drag them to get them up here," was the explanation. It might have satisfied Frank, at that, for a short time previously he had been lost in the Ubehebe country for two days. He ran across an Indian and promised him $20 if he would show him the way home. The Indian pointed across the valley and said, "There your house." Frank told the boys that he was so scared that he gave the native $5 more to lead him to his cabin door.

He must have lacked a bump of direction, for he became rather confused at the bottom of the shaft he had dug, intending to drift along the vein. But he had fastened his ladders upon the wall he had planned to tunnel, so he decided to strike out to the right and curve back to meet the ore. But as he worked and climbed his ladders loosened, so that one morning he fell the last 20 feet into the shaft. Getting up he beheld a hole in the rock behind him, and his first thought was that somebody had tried to high-grade his mine. So he dashed into the new opening and in a minute found himself back in the shaft. He had burrowed in a complete circle.

To get back to Tom Boland. Frank thought the Crapo residence would suit his needs exactly and promptly pre-empted it, permitting some of the boys to continue their boarding there as formerly. How to dislodge him was the problem Tom faced. But not for long, for the fertile imaginations of his friends soon hatched a scheme. So it was that one night all the roomers in the Crapo mansion except Frank went to bed with their socks on, and inside the socks each had placed some newspaper, insole fashion. Frank slept as God intended, his great soles catching whatever night wind might wander o'er the mountain. That is, he slept until the accomplice detailed to that job began to pull on the rosined string that had been fastened to the building. "What's that," yelled the Dutchman, jumping up."What, where?" from ten voices at once. "Over here! No, over there!" The whine rose every where at once, and the conspirators dashed forth in their garments *de nuit*. But they were not quite so fast as Frank, and the leader of that odd parade up the rubble-strewn street of Cerro Gordo that memorable night was a bare-footed, scared, one-eyed Dutchman, who would never return to Crapo's any more.

He acknowledged the debt the West owes to the women who often are omitted in the tales of pioneers. He noted the hardships they endured and their courage:

December 9, 1934. Why is it that, in such western fiction as Zane Grey's or Mary Austin's, the quintessence of loneliness is the prospector trudging across the wasteland, a stoical burro plodding behind? Or, when we see in an Auto Club publication the gaunt figure of a pocket-hunter and his carryall silhouetted against the sunset, what is wrong with the picture?

The answer, of course, is "Woman." Few advert to it, but it is the absence of the feminine touch that emphasizes the aloneness of the desert rat and makes him so eminently a part of the raw and cruel land he loves. Untrammeled by wife or sweetheart, he follows his fancy free. Like Robinson Crusoe he declaims, with a malicious twinkle,

"I am monarch of all I survey,
My reign there is none to dispute."

He has taken the desert to wife, and no spouse was ever more low during

her storms; praises her gorgeous spring finery, counsels with her always, and rejoices when, as woman ever, she rewards his affection with a momentary taste of her treasures whilst conserving their future mutual bliss by the lure of charms yet unrevealed.

There are women in the desert, but save those who were born here, rarely by choice. There is an old tradition in these parts that school-marms rarely escape alive. They marry a miner or a cattleman and become the presidents of our improvement clubs and mothers of our first families. But even these drafted ladies will readily grant that this is a man's country. Here men are men and, contrary to the radio quip, women don't like it. Woman is naturally gregarious. God made her a social being, and to lean over her back fence and find no one to talk to nearer than fifty or a hundred miles is too much to ask. Juliana of Norwich to the contrary notwithstanding, the all-wise Creator did not fashion females for anchorites. Your desert male can be oblivious to sand in his stew, dispense with starch in his shirt and sheets in his cot, but the gentler sex can be held to such routine only by love of God or man. Dwellers in isolation begin to talk to inanimate objects about them–I do it myself. "Lie there," I tell my fork, or "cut thin," I warn my knife. But I have known married men who have had to rush their wives back to the city when they found the good women seeking refuge from insanity by asking questions of the stove and confiding in the flatiron.

Hats off then to those women who, through the pitfalls of circumstance, have found themselves face to face with those terrors of the lonely places that have made strong men quail. These indomitable mothers, for those I have in mind were protecting their young ones against man and nature, fought both and won. There was Mrs. Cronin, now of Los Angeles, spending the years necessary for homestead rights in the forsaken gap at the upper end of Fish Lake Valley. Inyo does not forget Mrs. Ryan, who set out across Death Valley after the collapse of Rhyolite to meet her husband in Cerro Gordo. He had gone on before with a train of burros; she followed with her two boys, 8 and 6 years old, walking with them beside a mule team carrying barrels of water to keep the party alive during the 11-day journey. Men still speak of her nocturnal vigils with a rifle across her knees, guarding her claims after the death of her husband. She lives today in San Jose and her youngest lad is now a Jesuit missionary in China. There was but little choice for him, son of such a mother.

Yet long before the day of Mrs. Ryan, white women braved Death Valley. The Manly party, which named the valley, contained two mothers and their offspring, Mrs. Bennett and Mrs. Arcane. And traveling with her husband and children across the dread depression at that time was one of the noblest souls that ever followed the westward tide, Mrs. Brier. Her tale may well one day make a chapter by itself. But even in Death Valley, with the bodies of men who had died of thirst lying unburied about her, and behind and ahead days and months of thirst and starvation, the eternal female asserted

herself. Manly in his record tells how, after Rogers and he had found their way to San Fernando Mission and returned with food and a mule to rescue the remainder of the party camped with their starving oxen at what is now known as Bennett's Wells, they loaded the children on one ox, and the women each on one other. Naturally they left behind them, because of the hard way ahead and the condition of the animals, all unnecessary impedimenta. Yet Manly relates how Mrs. Arcane, who had brought some articles of finery from the city, could not be persuaded to leave them behind "to deck the Red man's wife," so concluded she would wear them. She added some extra long ribbons which streamed out behind as, seated on "Old Brigham," she climbed out of the Valley of Death. The pack on one of the oxen slipped loose, whereupon the animal began to kick wildly, and these antics were soon taken up by the other animals. Says Manly, "Mrs. Arcane's ox followed suit and waltzed around in the sand, bawling at every turn, fully as bad as any of the others; but Mrs. Arcane proved to be a good rider and hard to unseat, clinging desperately to her strap as she was tossed up and down and whirled about at a rate enough to make anyone dizzy. Her many fine ribbons flew out behind like the streamers from a masthead, and the many fancy 'fixins' she had donned fluttered in the air in gayest mockery. Eventually she was thrown, however, but without the slightest injury to herself, although her raiment was somewhat disordered." When I behold the modern daughter of ancient Eve, clad in bandana and shorts, step from her high-powered motor at a desert service station to sip ice-water from the bubbler, I wish some sculptor would carve in heroic marble Mrs. Arcane perched on her cavorting ox and place the work in the San Diego California Pacific Exposition next year. The title? Well, it might be called "The Vanishing American," or placarded with the French proverb, "The more things change, the more they are the same."

That the Padre could empathize with the early miners is clear from his description of the use of dynamite in the mining enterprise:

> *May 17, 1936.* "Boom-m-m!" The mine manager left his sentence hanging in air and turned, as did I, towards the hill. Up near the old dump, a great cauliflower of dust blossomed and vanished. In an instant, another took its place, then another, and another. Fifty yards away, a miner stood transfixed, his face lit with a holy joy. Farther up the slope, a half dozen others were scattered, each rapt in contemplation, oblivious of the fragments of rock falling around them in a sort of benediction. "The first blast," spoke my friend, but he was talking to no one in particular. He, too, looked as a devout Mohammedan must appear at the Kaaba, his eyes pregnant with the hope and joy that must be theirs who stand outside the building in which they are electing a Pope, watching for the telltale smoke from the chimney. "The

hopes and fears of all the years" –I found the lines running through my mind. Through the screen, I could see the cook at the kitchen door, her apron clutched in a nervous grip, eyes prepared for tears. Old Red, the burro that had never left the neighborhood during the two score summers since the mine was in its heyday, cocked an ear. "A little activity," he probably mused. But he didn't hee-haw. For which I was grateful. It would have been sacrilegious.

Dynamite makes sweet noise to the ears of a miner, the more so if its explosion signifies new enterprise or the reopening of a famed, but long-dormant property. If he has been one of those who worked in its drifts and shafts in better days, this rebirth is a secret prop to his pride. He had always known that there was a lot of ore back of that dike, but "them fellows quit too soon," or "Jack missed it by not cross-cuttin' from the 200." He forgets that this identical discussion may have been echoed by these very rocks not once, but many times before–nay, that he may have been the one who caused the change in direction or policy. What matters it now? We're starting all over again, and, with this new machinery, better roads, trucks and all that, why she's going to be a big mine. I tell you.

A huge red truck whined up the grade from Panamint a minute or so after the blasts, which had been set to free the road to the tunnel mouth of debris. I knew the driver, or thought I did. To be exact, I had never known that the legendary character whose name was inseparably connected with this property and that adjoining was the father of the man who was now delivering a load of lumber here from Lone Pine. He was coming home. He had played all over these hills as a lad; there were the very caves he used to hide in, the colored bottles over which he quarrelled with the neighbor's little girl. The little girl was not here today, but I know her too, and have often listened to her tales of her pet chuckawallas and herself as the miner's pet. That blast, I am sure, would have blown the years to smithereens if she had heard it.

Not a tree, not a level spot, save those cleared for roads or buildings; behind, the precipitous gray rock, interlarded with crooked dark dikes; before, the receding slope and the long dun reaches of Panamint Valley, ending over there in purple canyons that mark the skirts of snow-clad Telescope. Yet here men have struggled for generations with Mother Earth, struggled to extract from her a moiety of the riches she has hidden in the folds of her garments. There have been other opening blasts, other high hopes, other successes, other–shall I say it?–failures. For it was the possibility of failure that added sauce to the pudding, spice to the adventure. Here men fell out and fought, drank and were merry, grew weary and discouraged, sickened and died. Here, in short, was an epitome of life.

Life. For here, too, were the gentler aspects of our existence. Here women lived and loved; here children's voices set the hills to laughing. Here a woman–and what woman would not have done the same? –climbed up these

treacherous rock-strewn slides for a mile at night to visit her nearest female neighbor, at the mine next door. After all, one must have a bit of record that prayers were said in this lonely canyon to the good Lord, who, while He is reported to have pointed out but once where earthly wealth could be found, and that in the mouth of a fish, knows all about mines. May He bless this mine and all mines and miners. For them, certainly, the earth yields its fruits only by the sweat of their brows.

Telescope grows rose-colored in the alpenglow, and silence descends upon the desert. Not a wren, not a chatting chipmunk disturbs the stillness. Someone remarks: "Hear that silence." It is true; the quiet is almost audible. A vagrant breeze brings the smoke of the miners' pipes. Sitting in front of the bunkhouse, they puff and watch the creeping shadows. One of them remembers a tough hombre who used to muck here in the old days. Not only took his whiskey straight, but insisted on eating the glass afterwards. Another affirms this to be true. He had worked with him. Jake remembers that it is time for news, and turns on the radio, which runs on a battery. "Threats of war in Europe, floods in the East, airliner crashes, farmers threaten opponents of voluntary AAA [Agricultural Adjustment Administration.]" A star climbs over Wildrose, another peeps over the shoulder of the south wall. A primrose opens in the cool air, a coyote peers somewhere off in the murk. Peace.

It was the manager of this mine who asked a radio expert in Los Angeles for advice recently. He had been troubled with a great deal of static. "Must be your aerial. How long is it?" "Well, I just stretched it cross the canyon. Must be about 300 feet." "Too long. Just take a wire, tie a weight to it, and throw it over the aerial and tie the end to a tree." "But the nearest tree is 40 miles away." "Aw (deleted)."

He seemed to have an insight into the mindset of the prospector and the miner:

December 2, 1934. "Thar's gold in them thar hills!" If this quip of the stage and radio did not originate in Inyo it was simply because we have not only gold but silver, lead, zinc, iron, sulphur, talc, tungsten, and the whole gamut of metals in our mountains. And because we are true miners we modestly admit that our resources have not even been scratched.

What is there about this land that makes miners of us all? Men of sober judgment, and women, spend their first weeks listening, amusedly, to the tall tales of the lost Gunsight, or the Pegleg mines, or of the endless ore that lies just beyond the hard rock which finally stopped us. Then they suddenly find themselves being "taken for a ride" to a prospect hole or an abandoned shaft, and a few days later the metamorphosis is complete. They discourse glibly of dips and veins and country rock; winzes, drifts, and stopes are their meat and drink; on the slightest provocation, or without it, they will pro-

duce from their pockets a sample of quartz or galena or carbonate and begin, "Now this is just a piece of float, but I know where..." Thus hath Inyo begat another miner. They "first pity, then embrace."

It is the element of chance that provides the sauce for the delver in the bones of the earth. Just beyond lies wealth. Another month, another day, yea, another shot of powder will bring the world to his feet. The solitary worker at the end of a drift a 100 feet under ground thinks long thoughts, and his visions of opulence have become such part of him that he is not to be deterred by dulling steel or skeptical neighbors. He believes, and often truly, that the latter's motives are not entirely altruistic. He has a claim or two of his own for which he would like a little capital. So on he drills and blasts and mucks–for a shovel to us is a 'muckstick"–and time marches on. Then a day comes when they find him cold at the bottom of the shaft, or a crippling rheumatism condemns him to a fade-out by the decrepit stove in his shack, where he and a crony spin yarns of the heyday of the Yellow Aster, or of glories yet to be.

"A mining man," runs the apothegm, "is a man who has lots of money behind him, lots of money ahead of him, but none with him." The exception, of course, proves the rule. In his moments of despair, and they are few, the old prospector remembers the Mackays, the Floods, the Fairs, the Hearsts, and a score of others, and his flickering candle of hope flares up anew. Others have struck it and in worse country, why not he? And out under God's sky, with the powdered stars alone for an audience, who is there to say him nay? At worst, he figures, he can sell that talc prospect for a few thousand in order to put in a compressor on his silver property, which with the present price of silver should net him enough to live on until he can trace that float he found near the Upper Centennial Spring. Such is the stuff that dreams are made of.

The virus spares no one. The barber will regale you between strokes with his plans to knock off for a few days when things get quiet and go out in the Cosos with Jim Wigginton to locate that likely-looking rock Jim's burro kicked over three years ago after a cloudburst. Old man Ruiz, who has a sixth sense for minerals, is trying to date up the Padre for a hike up behind Swansea this winter to see the source of the specimens he has always on tap. The Padre, who has hiked a bit in his day, wonders whether he could keep up with the old man, who, despite his four-score years, still trots a wicked mile. Every service station has a display of native ores to charm the tourist and to evidence, perhaps, that the proprietor has traded gas for a quarter interest in the hole whence the samples come. Old Doc Woodin, God rest him, was the owner of an iron claim in the Cosos, taken perhaps in compensation for bringing a baby into Inyo. One of the cracks in a local minstrel referred to the Doc's difficulty in disposing of his mine, "because nobody wanted to buy Wooden iron."

When a returned prospector threw some ore on the counter of a saloon at Darwin and announced that it ran fifteen hundred dollars to the ton, the bartender called over Jack Stewart and asked him what he thought of it. "Oh, its good country rock," averred Jack, after a cursory examination. The owner bristled up. "Is that so? I'd like to know what is the richest ore you ever found?" "Well," quoth this son of Hassayampa, "I had a nice property at Greenwater once, a copper mine. It ran 100 per cent pure on the surface and got richer as it went down."

Inyokel recognized the modern-day prospector or miner in the form of the persistent rock hound and relic collector:

September 26, 1937. My desk is a 12-foot concrete slab, edged with a mosaic of a myriad of obsidian, jasper, and quartz. About my feet are strewn Indian grinding bowls, blocks of lava, and granite in which the round stones used for pestles still rest. Overhead hangs an ancient ox yoke, worn smooth where it slid along the necks of some patient brutes and weathered and decayed where it met the desert suns. An airplane propeller from an unlucky ship that crashed nearby is also suspended here, mute contrast in man's methods of transportation. I push aside a chunk of petrified wood to allow my typewriter carriage to function, for I am writing these lines in the back room of Mrs. Gordon's wayside inn at Homestead, half the journey from Mojave to Lone Pine.

This is historic ground. Here on a night in January 1850, Manly and Rogers climbed out of the long plain that stretches away towards the Slate Range and found the Jayhawkers camped by a fire. The two parties had separated in Death Valley and Manly was now on his heroic trek to seek help for the rest of his expedition, starving and exhausted down in that vale of sorrow. Here the spring known as Indian Wells still flows, and the artifacts that line the shelves about tell of the earliest dwellers, whose descendants are now to be found only in lonely cabins at the end of hidden canyons. One wrinkled specimen is Tom Spratt, whose father was the noted Jack Spratt, his mother a Paiute. Jack Spratt's ancestral roots reached into the Emerald Isle. He was a bandit of parts, and used the Robber's Roost two miles south of here as a hideout and vantage point in stage coach days.

I said once in this column that it is not a blameworthy weakness to become a "rock-hound" if you live in the desert. Nature, like human rock collectors, saves and displays her choicest gew-gaws only to her intimates. Hence it is not to be wondered at that those who roam over lava slopes and burrow in the heart of Mother Earth should come home laden with geodes and arrowheads and turquoise, or that through the years the walls should begin to sag with rusted relics, the yard to be peopled with cacti that bristle and snuggle and crawl. Mrs. Gordon found Homestead, which she thus

named because that is what it was, a sage-cloaked hillside on the highway's edge. Today, its lava-edged cactus beds and rainbow rookeries cause the Reno-bound tourist to lift his foot from the throttle, perhaps to stop and gape at the gallery of wonders within. For in less than a decade she has gathered here one of the most remarkable collections of desert flora and specimens of ore and semi-precious stones that the region can boast of. And for fauna, well, there are the love birds and the canaries and the pheasants. And, of course, the strutting and screaming peacocks, who here find severe competition in the pied walls and borders of their home.

A Sharp buffalo breech-loading rifle, discovered on the property, hangs above a window. Against a shelf leans a crude left-handed sickle rescued from an Indian midden, undoubtedly a relic of a raid on a pioneer party. On a case stands a mountain sheep skull weighing more than 30 pound in its dried condition, evoking awe at the tremendous strength of the agile animal that once held it so gracefully aloft on Pilot Knob, where Mrs. Gordon discovered it. Radium ore from the new Bishop mine at Red Rock shares honors with dendritic opal (stop me if I am wrong), galena, and sulphur ore. On a table literally paved with slabs of marble from Carrara, Nev., rest fossil oyster shells and a meal in stone. Here in freak forms are fried eggs, baked potatoes, and steaks, for all the world appearing as if they had been petrified by a wave of some fairy wand in some Eocene cafe. At that, they might be parboiled even yet to equal some modern fare.

There is a freemasonry among rock-hounds, which advances the cause of the craft. Mrs. Gordon has friends in all corners of the country who exchange specimens with her and who will send even from across the seas little treasure boxes of Australian fire opals, stones from Solomon's Temple, or miniature pottery from the land of the Incas. Yesterday, two collectors returning from Montana to their home near Hanford dropped here a whole load of iridescent slag formed by the burning of a stack of barley straw. Last week, a Lone Pine stone polisher sent her a choice group of local gems. Thus it goes. I should have added that last phrase at the end of this paragraph, for I am taking home with me a slab of slag and two creeping cacti. It is thus it goes.

And in a follow-up column he wrote of the role Mrs. Gordon's husband had in the rock-hounding enterprise:

January 21, 1938. While I am in this explanatory mood I want to smooth Bob Gordon's feelings. Bob is the man responsible for the "Gordon" in Mrs. Gordon's name, and Mrs. Gordon, you may recall, is the silver-haired Juno who gathers rocks and serves lunches down at Homestead. In my story of the miscellany Mrs. Gordon has assembled in her establishment on Highway 6, I did not mention Bob. The reason was that up to then Bob had been,

shall we say the body of the rock-sleuthing expeditions, his spouse the soul? She furnished the inspiration, he the gasoline and the pick-up. Of course, once on location Bob did his share of the searching, but his presence there was due to the wiles of the "petromaniac" who bears his name. But it was Bob, and not the Mrs., who discovered the magnificent mountain sheep skull which graces their dining room, and Bob who carried it laboriously across the mountain to the car. So to Bob the kudos, and Inyokel's apologies. I promise not to disturb your bones again.

Poor Bob has been exposed too long to the collecting virus, however, and when last we chatted my heart was moved for him. For now he is ever eager to be up and away, to Barstow, to Calico, to Pilot Knob, to Sweetwater–just mention a spot where fluorite or azurite or opal or pyrites lie about, and Bob is looking for somebody to watch the gas pump and is telling his partner to put on her heavy wraps and throw some provisions together. Between customers he is pounding his larger specimens into pieces of a size to fasten to the plaster-clad ash-trays and bowls and flower-pots that he is devising for the trade. And I heard the Padre telling the two Gordons last week that he had not hitherto heard of mineral specimens as grounds for divorce, but that if they did not stop trying to steal each other's treasures for their respective displays he feared their romance would soon go on the rocks. Thus does the desert wield her charms and drive respectable folk plumb crazy.

Like most operators of wayside service stations, Bob Gordon is subject to call at night by drivers who may need fuel or other aid. I have often pitied the Samaritan who rises from a cozy couch at 2 a.m., tucks a nightshirt into his trousers, steps into a pair of slippers, and gropes out into a howling blast to earn a quarter. The driver is dressed for the night, and he is abroad of his own volition. The poor shivering devil on the pump handle could have refused to answer the night bell, but he did not. Yet there are times, as Bob relates, when even being a friend to man has its limits. For it was almost 3 of a piercing morning when two youths roused him to consciousness. Would he check their oil? Bob drew out the old rod, which showed a full reservoir. "Thanks. We were worried." Away they drove over the hill towards Reno. Bob says it was 15 minutes before he could bring his eyes from the spot where they had disappeared and find words in any known tongue that would reduce his blood pressure enough to permit him to go back to bed.

Historical events were of interest to Father Crowley, enough to warrant reading old newspaper accounts from the *Inyo Independent*. The following provided material from the year of the famous Lone Pine earthquake which occurred in 1872:

February 25, 1940. Modesty was not a part of the stock in trade of the merchants of Inyo and Mono in 1872. The advertisements in the *Inyo*

Independent for April 6 of that year, the earthquake issue I quoted last week, betray the genesis of the All-Year Club and the Los Angeles chamber of commerce. "The finest," "the only complete line," "everything else usually carried in a first-class country store," "the largest and the best," "the most elegant style"–I doubt if there was a positive or comparative degree of any adjective used in Eastern California in that era–superlatives ruled the day. Is there a salesman in these fearless '40s who would dare take in as much territory as Harris and Rhine of Independence, agents for Florence sewing machines, who say Florence "is the best because it so seldom gets out of order. If there is one not working well in California, Oregon, Washington territory, Nevada, Idaho, Alaska, British Columbia, Mexico, Japan, or China, if informed of it, we will fix it without any expense to the owner."

Drug stores were frightfully frank. John Lentell of Independence carried "patent medicines for man and beast–hair restoratives and dyes, self-adjusting trusses, stationery, confectionery, and nuts, with choice apples always on hand." His competitor, Dr. Blair, who had just opened up his establishment, claims to have "everything to be found in a well-regulated drug store," including (for cash only) "to my friends and the public generally," "drugs, perfumeries of all kinds, hair brushes, pebble spectacles, paints, oils, window glass, paint brushes, and varnishes of all kinds." Apparently the women of 1872 also believe in save the surface and you save all. Dr. Blair advises prospective customers that "the dispensing department is under my own supervision, and orders are promptly attended to. Call and take a dose with me." What a man!

The Boomerang Saloon at Swansea ran to polysyllables in the praising of its wares-"The best of drinkables, cigars, and etceteras, always on hand for dispensation at the slightest possible remuneration," and the Headquarters Saloon in Independence is manned by "first class mixologists. First-class billiard table and clubrooms attached, wherein gentlemen can profitably entertain themselves." Could those have been the "boys in the back room?" C.D. Begole, the first man to climb Mt. Whitney, had his establishment literally about his ears after the quake, but the ad still read that he "had thoroughly overhauled and refitted his popular place of resort," with the "finest stock ever brought into the county to be disposed of over the bar at the usual rates." The Cosmopolitan up at Cerro Gordo generously asked the reader to "call and sample our wet groceries," while Ned Reddy of the same camp, where water sold at 20 cents a gallon, scores a point with "adulteration with water being no object, and keeping none but the very best, etc." The lot of D.J. Canty at Lone Pine's Orleans Hotel must have been easier than that of the Independence druggist who was prepared to drink a dose with all comers. Canty simple suggests that the public "call and take a smile."

There was Christian charity abroad in the land those days, if its reflection in the ads is true. I offer to one A. Hitler, et al., the following card:

"Editors *Inyo Independent* I deem it my duty to let the public know that I render my thanks to Messrs. Charles Burroughs and A.C. Harvey for the kind and prompt assistance rendered to me by them on the morning of the 26th ultimo. Had it not been for the combined exertions of these gentlemen I would not now be numbered among the living. From one unearthed from a living death, MEYER COHN."

And to all and sundry who perceive of printers and editors as deviscerated beings who need no sustenance, this: "Married. At the residence of A. Mack, Esq. March 25 by the Rev.Ira P. Hale, Mr. James Otis Wheeler to Miss Rosetta M. Walters, all of Partwick, Mono County, Calif. The couple forgot not the printers in their happiness, and the cake and wine accompanying the above notice was consumed amid the general quaking–the types and presses dancing a rattling accompaniment to the toasts in their honor."

In view of the present attempt by the Southern Pacific Railroad to substitute trucks for trains in Inyo, the following piece of fearless journalism, taken from the editorial column, is of interest. "The bill asking the right of way for a railroad through this county to Los Angeles was defeated in the senate. A few hired lackeys of the C.P.R.R. accomplished this thing, far more discouraging to the prospects of this region than the earthquake. For five or ten dollars apiece (We suppose that is their price), Senators Oulton, Duffy, Evans, and Tompkins worked might and main in persuading the others that a terrible wrong would be inflicted upon the people of this county if this bill should pass–if some of our own citizens should be granted the exclusive right-of-way upon a narrow strip of territory; a very great wrong, no doubt, if it had been for the big monopoly they were legislating this grant."

Before I lay aside this remarkable issue of a remarkable paper, I want to quote, without comment the item the editors label "Sorrowful." It runs: "A sad tale comes from Selma, N.Y. It appears that 12 young men of that city 'swore off' on New Year's day, 1871, and agreed to deposit with one of their number on the first day of each month $10 each, the total to be divided among the members of the association who, on Jan. 1, 1872, should prove to have been faithful to their pledge. One by one the members backslid and yielded to the liquor temptation, and only a single individual was left, who at noon on New Year's day was to receive $1,400. This Abdiel faithful found among the faithless, proceeded to the rendezvous at the appointed hour. He waited until ten minutes after noon, and then thought he would run into the saloon next door and get a nip. He had just swallowed it when ten of the other members entered to take their noon-day Angostura and he found to his horror that his watch was 20 minutes fast and the money was lost! The man then proceeded to the residence of the treasurer, and found that he had lost all the money playing draw poker with one of the church trustees. The sad occurrence has cast a gloom over the whole community."

10

NATURE'S WONDERS

Mother Nature in the desert always held a fascination for the Padre–whether the encounter was pleasant or otherwise. He wanted to experience everything the desert had to offer, even the sudden cloudbursts that caused havoc on the roadways and railroad tracks:

August 2, 1936. I had never seen a chocolate waterfall previously. Hence, I could hardly be censured for wanting to get right up in the spray to see if it was real. The clouds had ripped open somewhere this side of Whitney and dropped a few thousand tons of water in the Lone Pine watershed. As the stream rolled down the canyon, it gathered all the loose soil in its path, boulders the size of medicine balls going along, too. For an hour this sepia torrent dashed over the verge of Whitney Falls, as strange a sight as ever I had beheld. Three hours later the mud reached Lone Pine, and flowed from every faucet and shower. Thirsty as one might be it took a lot of grit to down a drink. Or rather, he who drank downed a lot of grit. Drawing one's water supply from a gurgling mountain stream is not always what one might imagine. But it does fill one with the countryside.

Two days before the deluge to the west of us, the heat did things to the Death Valley road. The accumulated moisture from other regions was disgorged almost simultaneously on both slopes of Panamint Valley, and two exuberant floods raced down the highway. Rather, they began on the highway. But the highway entered into the spirit of the occasion and went right along with them. The first miners to reach the edge of Zinc Hill found that a few minutes of concentrated effort by the elements had removed every trace of the hand or foot or road machinery of man, who sometimes has a nasty way of patting himself on the back. The state highway graders and scrapers are pushing and dragging Darwin Wash and Towne's Pass, and a detailed report will be sent to Sacramento on repairs in the Death Valley sector. Tomorrow a torrid crag may prick another pompous and frowning waterwagon of the skies, and down will go highway, tractors and all. The desert is that way. Dry as a bone, it receives but a trace of normal rainfall in the customary rainy season. But, when the rest of the West packs picnic baskets without a glance at the skies, whole lakes plop into scorched canyons with a roar that can never be forgotten, the torrents carrying with them

mountains of soil and boulders, obliterating landmarks, scarring the land, and vanishing into air and earth in an hour without any appreciable benefit. But nothing is ever lost, scientists tell us. They were not thinking, of course, of the poor devil that might be camping in the path of one of these 20-foot walls of water.

The Santa Fe Railroad early learned the danger from cloudbursts, and built the diversion dikes and ditches so familiar to transcontinental tourists. The Tonopah and Tidewater, the railroad that reaches down to Death Valley, has a wrecking crew that literally lives on cloudbursts, often two a day. And, while these catastrophes follow certain established routes–hence the ditches– there is no certainty about them. Like lightning, you are sure of the location of a cloudburst only after it strikes. And then you may not be interested.

Many of the local wiseacres assert that the lost Breyfogle mine in Death Valley is buried under the debris of a cloudburst. It is certain that many "showings" have been thus obfuscated, but there remains the possibility that a future spout may uncover another bonanza, for nothing scours the hills like one of these. Fossils, too, thus come to light, and the recent discovery of the Titanothere–stop me if I am wrong–remains in Titus Canyon was owing to erosion. This perpetual washing down of canyon walls into the valleys creates the type of canyon that is almost peculiar to Panamint, the goblet canyon. Its cup is the upper portion of the cut in the mountain; its stem the narrowing steep-walled gulch itself; its base the flaring talus that reaches down to the valley floor.

At the foot of these great mounds of detritus the prospector frequently finds float, a piece of ore that has been carried out by the tide, but from where? That is the rub. He searches for weeks and for months and for years, and may die without locating the lode. And, if he has kept his secret, no other will bother to take up the search, which now might end in success because of further erosion. "Nobody can see under the ground," the desert rat axiomises. A dead man least of all. Thus mines are lost and found, hearts broken and wounds healed, while the clouds float where they list.

He lamented the fact that he missed most of the cloudbursts:

August 7, 1938. Would that I had the luck of the Irish. In all the years I have known the desert I have never yet been caught in a real cloudburst. I have seen them from a distance of several leagues; I have left just before one broke or I have arrived after one of them had ripped the countryside apart. But I have never had to dash for the canyon walls to escape a rushing wall of water, and until that day comes I shall feel that life is not complete. If only I had been last week where I was this week I could have stood with Ray Goodwin on a mesa beside Emigrant Wash at the entrance to Death Valley

and have watched a lake a mile long and half a mile wide form on Harrisburg Flat in ten minutes and then, when it spilled over down the wash, leap ten feet deep and 75 feet wide through the defile, swirling back in great water-wheels from boulders in its path. Or I could have beheld six miles of roadway between Ryan and Dante's View covered seven feet deep in mud within a twinkling, or have trembled as the flood, dammed up behind the dikes erected in Furnace Creek last winter "to handle any spout Death Valley has seen in 50 years," roared right over the top instead of taking time to follow the man-made channels. Eight thousand dollars worth of damage was done to oiled roads in Death Valley while you would be pronouncing the names of a couple of the places that Hughes avoided on his 'round-the-world hop. And I? I was sitting at my window wondering if it would rain. Life–that is, my life–is that way.

He also noted the toll on human lives as in the following report:

March 27, 1938. Drowning is certainly not a common method of desert demise, yet Everett Riders found death in the roaring torrent of the Amargosa at the height of the deluge. Five hours previously the river bottom was as dry as it had been for centuries; today the chuckawalla basks on the cottonwood trunks that rolled across the waste in the tawny tide the night that Everett laid down his life for his fellowman. A Nevada state highway truck stopped in the rushing stream, its ignition flooded. In the dark, the driver made the Beatty shore and sought help in the town. Another car ploughed into the rear of the stalled truck in his absence, injuring two of the occupants so badly that they could not stem the onrushing waters. With others, Everett Riders stood on the far bank and planned a rescue. He was sure he could get across, and four men held a rope tied to his waist. But he was swept off his feet, and the others began to slip into the river, too. They let go–all but one, a lad named Weils–who was whirled a half mile downstream before the rope tore from his then limp fingers. He was found unconscious in a bush. Riders's body was discovered the next day six miles away on a sandbar. In a land that nurtures heroes, this man's sacrifice can never be forgotten.

And in a lighter vein:

March 27. 1938. It was this same Amargosa River, and in Spanish Amargosa means bitter, that provided the setting for another drama in its rampage. One of the employees at a Death Valley hostelry fell in love, as men do even in the desert, with a lady fair, and all on a winter's day he took an afternoon off to drive to his charmer's home in Nevada to hie with her to Tonopah for a license and thence to a justice to make them one forevermore, or for as

much of forever as a justice can option. But when they were coming through the Rye–Amargosa to you–the engine quit. The swain strove to start it, but in vain, as the water rose above the floor then to the roof of the car, and there just managed to keep above the waves. In a burst of courage, they dove into the flood and kicked and swam and drifted to shore. But ashore they realized that they were on the wrong bank. The license and the justice and bliss lay in the other direction. So again they risked all and emerged exhausted on the Tonopah side, whence they hiked to help, and eventually to the marrying judge. But it was three days before the bridegroom could again negotiate the waters wild and appear at his place of work. Sad to relate, his employers had hired another in his place, having assumed that he, as others, have done in the past, had taken French leave and had no intention of returning. At last report, however, the woman of the party is gainfully employed, so the nuptials were not a complete washout. So, to those who would embark upon the sea of Matrimony, beware the tides of March!

Other effects of floodwaters are recounted, not without a few pointed barbs at the city of Los Angeles:

March 27, 1938. A flood in Southern California interests us, for Inyo's bond with Los Angeles is a watery one. And in this instance, the proverb to the contrary, water is thicker than blood. So when we learn that the City has too much water we may be pardoned a sort of Charlie McCarthy "da da da da!" as we finger rusty wagon wheels or muse on the Sierra glimpsed through a dead apple tree. The Queen of the Pacific, the Mistress of the West, left as stranded as a fisherman on a rock by three days of rain from the heavens, with nary a railroad, nor a road, nor a plane, nor a phone. And Hollywood, tsk,tsk! You remember Hollywood, of course. That is the place where they make those terrifying hurricanes and earthquakes and locust plagues and fires, you have shuddered at in the dark of the movie houses. Well, in Hollywood some of the actresses had to be carried from their cars to the sidewalk, the water was that high! Far from us to forget the real sorrow and loss of life that the catastrophe brought. For these Inyo grieves. But those who strut should expect a discreet "ahem" behind a polite and covering hand when they come a cropper. So the local citizenry winked knowingly when radio announcers in other cities yielded to a long-leashed urge to tell the world that Los Angeles was all wet.

Continuing on the same topic of floods he commented:

March 27, 1938. Oh, it rained on the desert too. And while the natural absorbency of the sand, plus the lack of large centers of population made the damage insignificant in most instances, there was the devil to pay when

erstwhile dry rivers took out railroads and highways in a mad holiday. It was no small job even to find the tracks of the Tonopah and Tidewater at Silver Lake when that euphonious spot suddenly took on water, and it will be weeks before service can be resumed. The Santa Fe and the Union Pacific alike suffered in the canyons traversed by their rails, their streamliners actually living up to their name in unlooked-for fashion. Johnny Mills says that the only railroads in Southern California operating in those days were the narrow-gauge in the borax mine at Ryan, and the toy train on Ray Goodwin's porch at Cow Creek.

A peculiar backwash from the flood affected the Owens Valley when the city of Los Angeles, unable to dispose safely of the ocean the aqueduct was taking south from here, opened every spillway along the big ditch and spread water over highway and private and public lands for leagues. At Little Lake the rising tide bore the bass and perch far out into the desert of Indian Wells Valley, where they either perished or were gathered up by youngsters with pails. Owens Lake, fed from half a dozen overflows, has become a ten-mile mirror of America's grandest mountains. The inundation of the alkali beds of the lake bottom has caused the Natural Soda Products plant to shut down indefinitely, since its refining process is based upon definite water levels and density. The vanishing of a $10,000 monthly payroll from Keeler and Lone Pine has brought this locality the worst setback it has known in a generation.

Besides floods, were snows to observe and to praise the Creator for their beauty:

March 15, 1936. Travelers from less rugged climes must be momentarily puzzled when they see on the sage-bordered highway a great gob of icy snow sitting solitary in the sun. All about are sand and aridity; whence came this frigid meteor? The question is answered if the visitor encounters a truck or car coming south from Reno way after a storm in the higher elevations. Snow adheres to the under side of the fenders, freezing to the frame, and frequently remains there until the vehicle is scores of miles distant from the white-mantled slopes. Even to us who live here, this perpetual contrast of sun and sleet, parched desert and ermined pines is an unfailing excuse for a Benedicite, "Bless the Lord, all ye creatures!"

On the travertine terraces of Furnace Creek Inn, doddering old dames chatter and nod. Below them, lithe youths and maidens shout "Love" across the tennis courts or slip beneath the emerald veil of the placid pool beside the palms. A breeze caresses the Stars and Stripes above the ranger's checking station at the mouth of the wash and bears to the lotus-eater's ears the clop-clop of hoofs. Some Hollywood-dodging star or capitalist incog is off for a morning canter. But across the valley floor, where the singed and

tortured land is lifted in crumpled ridges and purple canyons speak of lonely labyrinths, the towering Panamints stand hooded in white. Around the piñons that cling to Telescope's flank, I know the cold fingers of the gale are searching mercilessly. But, in Death Valley, the gale's gentle little sister zephyr fondles the shorn lambs.

Not many days ago, a sizable group of the velvety snowflakes of which the poets sing, executed a coup in Big Pine Canyon. Marshalling their forces after the latest storm, they descended upon Glacier Lodge and literally flattened two cabins and filled another with tons of snow. Posts were reduced to matchwood, iron bedsteads twisted like wire. Plumbing was sheared off at the floor, and the fixtures may or may not be discovered somewhere down stream when the big thaw comes. I think it was that afternoon that I watched the bluebirds flitting about the rabbit brush and spotted the first curling stalks of the brodiaea on a sunny slope. Incredible Inyo, county of contrasts!

His readers could all identify with the trials and tribulations of winter. They probably became more philosophical about the hazards when Inyokel enumerated them:

January 17, 1937.

...When all around the wind doth blow
And coughing drowns the parson's saw,
And birds sit brooding in the snow,
And Marian's nose looks red and raw...

Thus the Bard of Avon marked the arrival of winter in Merrie England. Winter in Inyo, west of Death Valley, varies little from Shakespeare's. Marian might be Minga or Petra or Marlene, but the wind still blows, and of a Sunday morn a hacking chorus greets the Padre's "Thecod Tudday after Epiphany." Three bluebirds, isolated ambassadors in winter's domain, are nibbling at pyrocanthus berries in the lee of the neighbor's wall. A fourth sips from a hollow in the flagstone walk where the impotent sun has managed to melt a fallen icicle. A fat blackbird cocks his beady eye at a few dried blades emerging from the snow and scratches fitfully about. "All around the wind doth blow," playing on every note in the flute afforded by the eaves and crannies, leaking in at the window rims, and leaching through the very eyelets of your shoes to your defenseless toes entrenched at the last frontier.

Erstwhile respectable citizens battle their way up the middle of the street, crouching like football carriers, goloshed and stocking-capped even as Sam Weller on the ice. They gingerly step aside for autos literally steaming by, chains clinking like a slave dancer. Other denizens shiver and prod in ankle-deep slush, seeking frozen and riven water mains, or with burning oil strive to soothe the troubled waters. Plumbers dash madly hither and yon–I told

one of them that if any of them had been church-going men I would have suspected they had prayed for this freeze-up–haggard, pretending not to see desperate householders waving at them from kitchen skating rinks and backyard bergschrunds.

The dentist has just taken home his acetylene tank and torch to drag after him on his third diurnal crawl under the house to coax a trickle from the bathroom pipes. The Nazarene minister is wielding a pick in the tundra before his residence, praying perhaps that he will be blessed enough to find the frozen artery before the sun set. The Lions' Club postpones its meeting because the Methodist Church hall, where the men would dine, looks like the Crystal Palace and Carlsbad Caverns rolled into one. I felt none too kindly toward the Padre after skinning my knuckles on the ice block in the holy water stoup on Epiphany, but I relented when I watched him breathe vaporously on the water cruet, held between his palms like a lad about to whistle sharply, attempting to thaw it out for the Offertory.

Not even an earthquake could do such tricks with plumbing fixtures. I know of a neighbor's lavatory that rose up in the night and now rests on a couple of boxes. Toilets lean like mushrooms, kitchen sinks make convenient shelves, trimmed modernistically with aluminum bands, marked "Hot" and "Cold," both as dry as Death Valley in August. Where were once hot water coils in kitchen ranges, fire no longer glows, and shivering housewives eke out an unsatisfying meal on oil heaters, trusting to the long nights and the mound of blankets to restore circulation to their numbed limbs. And bathing! We have all grown somehow darker in hue, or is it the glistening background against which we move these days? But why complain? An artist living a half mile up the creek has just come in to tell me that he chops a hole in the ice every morning to secure water, and that it is not half bad if one stays in bed. Besides, one of the bluebirds has hopped up on my window-sill. "Was there a message?"

Auto-skiing is hardly a sport for the novice, yet many tried it and failed during the week. Fifteen or more motorists found themselves headed for our roadside ditches and could do nothing about it, ending up in most awkward and frequently ludicrous positions, and sometimes not even pointed in the direction they wished to take. Four or five others were even more vigorous and halted bottoms up, wheels spinning, and perhaps heads. Thank God for no fatalities to date, but the mixture of Sunny California motorists and Atlantic seaboard weather is always productive of the unusual.

Other thoughts on Mother Nature were expressed on a hot midsummer day:

July 26, 1936. Thirty minutes from the sweat bedewed typewriter, a brawling stream finds itself at the edge of a 100-foot precipice and falls protest-

ing over. Here the thin red line on the thermometer climbs to 115–half an hour away I know I could lie on my back and watch the great pines undulate in the unseen breezes far above. Here the sands themselves seem about to evanesce in a bluish vapor, the sage bushes become dancing wraiths in an inferno that dries every drop of moisture from your body. Up there, beneath that patch of snow that hangs on Whitney's cheek, the columbines toss their heads by the lakeside, and the water ouzel dives to his home under the cataract's lip. 'Tis consoling to know that roads and the auto have made it possible for us to climb 1,000 feet in ten minutes and have brought the pines to our doorstep, but it is the torture of Tantalus to know these things and be chained to a blistering machine down in the valley while the mercury rockets. One of the seven deacons of Rome was done to death in some such fashion, chained to a gridiron. St. Lawrence, pray for us!

And a little tip for the housewife at the end of summer:

August 22, 1937. Now that preserving time is at hand again and the good housewife is cluttering the tables with Mason jars and every nook and cranny with strange and savory smells, Inyokel feels that he should contribute his bit in the way of household hints. I hope the editor does not ask me to take this on as a regular department, such as "How To Save Your Carpets," by Hardrock Ike, or "Desserts from the Desert" by Alkali Pete. Seriously, if you are putting up jams or jellies these days, I know where you can find the most delicious wild gooseberries. And all the world knows, or should, that when it comes to jams wild gooseberries are the *ne plus ultra* and the *ultima thule*. So jump in your car, first making sure that it is in excellent condition and the tires fairly new, and bring lots of extra water. Drive to Panamint Valley over the Slate Range or the Zinc Hill or the Furnace Creek roads. All are hot and nerve-racking, and your consolation will be that the roads you did not take are probably worse. Then drive across Panamint Sink, where all the evil you have ever done will rise up before you as possible reasons for your present incineration. Thence travel up Wildrose Canyon, past Thorndyke's to Mahogany Flat, at about the 8,000-foot level on Telescope Peak. There, leave your boiling vehicle and follow the trail to the summit. You will not have to go all the way to the top, for at about 10,000 feet you will discover the gooseberry patches in the draws, acres and acres of them. The rest is easy, and I am sure you will long cherish the fruits of this trip. Imagine, just acres of them?

Fall came in for an "honorable mention" in the contest of the seasons:

November 11, 1934. Our valley is now a symphony in yellow. Autumn has lined the highway with phalanxes of brilliant rabbit brush, a veritable path of

gold. From afar these chrome-colored shrubs present a solid front; near at hand they prove to be markedly individual, seldom less than a yard apart. Where they spill over into the swales, for they seem to like the moister ground, they look for all the world like sheep from Ophir; or as if some Midas had turned his flock to gold as they cropped among the sage. Overnight the despised cottonwoods have burgeoned forth in flavid cloaks, dappled with orange. Avenues of poplars are now rows of saffron geysers, as if some great auriferous, subterranean stream had suddenly found a hundred vents though which to belch into the blue. Along the fences crawls the fiery tongue of the Virginia creeper, a crimson thread on the golden fleece. "Lord, it is good for us to be here."

The mountains and the high altitude of his surroundings prompted him to investigate the effects that both can have on body and soul. This was written shortly after his own ascent of Mt. Whitney, so he spoke from experience:

September 30, 1934. That stuffed feeling in the ears, and the resultant relief when a gulp or two equalizes the pressure upon the ear-drums, are familiar to all who have risen a few thousand feet above sea level. Those who have essayed to hike or run about the eight-thousand foot elevation wonder what has happened to their hearts–they sound like woodpeckers sinking for coy-grubs. Nose-bleeds are common, while many have a tingling of the finger-ends that keeps them in touch with the barometer. Campers on the ten-thousand-foot meadows may awaken after their first night with a feeling that the pack mule has sat upon their chests all through the hours of darkness, so sore are their muscles from the unwonted strain of trying to gather enough oxygen from the thin air for the functions of life.

But in general the true mountain illness overtakes you when you get above the two-mile limit. Your head rings, and the landscape seems a trifle unsteady at times. A disconcerting nausea, which may be worse if one has eaten nothing, is augmented by the liquids you greedily quaff for your fevered mouth and throat. Every step, you are convinced, is your last, and if you reach your goal, it will probably be upon hands and knees. Of course I speak now of those who hike, and not of all of those, for practice, gradual acclimatization and robust constitutions tend to remove the danger of mountain fever. But even gay cavaliers are apt to act like a fish out of water when they ride into the higher brackets.

Cook books are useful only for kindling when you are, as our Oriental friends say, "top-side." For the reduced atmospheric pressure so lowers the boiling point that all time standards of the average kitchen must be scrapped. My scientific friends may be able to state the degrees in figures, but I can merely relate that I have held my hand in water boiling atop Mount Muir,

and have drunk it at that temperature. If you have days without end you can try cooking beans or potatoes up there. As for eggs, if they are fresh the patient soul may nurse them through to edibility without hatching. I once tried tea at 14,000, and I have not tried it since. Last week the Padre made coffee on Mount Whitney and indulged in a beauty bath afterwards. He noticed that the can of condensed milk was bulging suspiciously, and decided that it had been taken from discontented cows, soured on life perhaps. But there being no other supply he stuck his jackknife blade into the cover and was promptly rewarded with a geyser that left him dripping. Only then did it dawn on him that the decreased pressure upon the mountain top was responsible for the bulge from within. He now knows what condensed milk is, and is speculating on whether, if you inveigle a cow to the top of the United States, you would have to milk her.

The Padre slipped off to make a retreat on the hill at Los Altos the other day. (When I re-read this sentence I found that I had written "the Padre slipped oof!") I like retreat-houses set upon hilltops. They conduce to prayer, for prayer is converse with Him whose "Feet are upon the mountains." David voiced the thought of mankind when he sang, "I have lifted up my eyes to the mountains from whence help shall come to me." Sinai and Carmel, the Mount of Temptation and Thabor, Calvary and Olivet–these were the trysting places of God and man. Above the smoke and murk and the earth's miasma close enough to hear the swish of the angels' wings, mountain tops are the battleground of titans. "Here the air is clearer, here heaven is nearer, here God is more nigh."

In his *Death Valley in '49* William Lewis Manly tells us that he would go ahead of the ox train and climb some high peak in order to be able to warn the others of the route to be traversed. In this way he could plot his course across the unknown desert, prepared, at least in spirit, for the long waterless treks and the foodless days. Looking back he could see the weary miles they had trudged, the scenes of their disappointments. From such an elevation he gazed one day across Death Valley, which he was to name, the Amargosa (bitter) River, and across the barren leagues beyond which he knew the distant mountain wall hid from his view the promised land of California. Inyokel thinks Manly's hours on the summits are like retreats. When we climb to a place apart, we can look back in that clear air upon our aimless wanderings and our detours, and ahead to other dangers that our experience will help us to avoid. We can envision the green isles of refreshment, the waters of bitterness and contradiction, the valley of death through which we must pass. And dimly glimpsed beyond the rim lie the fields of Paradise and rest eternal.

I am minded , too, of retreats whenever a service station attendant peers over the taffrail of my Lizzie and purrs, "Check your oil?" For if the foolish virgins in the parable had checked their oil, i.e. had made a retreat, they would not have been caught napping. Which brings to me that establish-

ment conducted by some religious zealots in Mint Canyon, bearing a sign, "Soul Service Station. Come in and pray." I am going to suggest to the Padre that he hang a legend on his confessional, "Crankcase drained free!"

The dryness of the desert has its advantages and disadvantages, especially in the days before air-conditioning, as described here:

October 14, 1934. The current *Columbia* carries an advertisement for a home air-conditioner, with this blurb: "Every man or woman fears the desert because the relative humidity is low (about 20%) and impossible for plant or animal life to develop. You need proper relative humidity! You must have it!" So that's it. And I thought it was high blood pressure that held me down. This explains too why so many of us desert rats are old men at 80, and why Panamint Tom and some other Indian nonagenarians are not as spry as they used to be. They haven't watched their relative humidity. The retarded plant development is plainly responsible for the cactus never having evolved a running attack. With relative humidity it would prove a formidable opponent.

Seriously, the relative humidity of the wasteland is indeed low, but save in such spots as Death Valley the lack of moisture in the atmosphere does not shorten human life. Palm Springs and kindred resorts prove rather that the uncloaked sun of the desert is highly beneficial. And we confidently predict that Death Valley itself will soon be internationally famed as a winter health resort.

There are interesting symptoms of this dryness of the air. The visitor finds his lips cracked, his eyes burning, his throat parched. Perspiration cannot be detected, for the moisture of the body evaporates as soon as it reaches the surface. Soap becomes hard and brittle as chalk. Pianos are forever being tuned, and unattended soon fall apart. Kiln-dried lumber shrinks for years after installation, and one of the common experiences of the days of wooden spokes in auto wheels was their working loose from hub and rim to such a degree that a car took on sea-legs, and often collapsed both fore-an'-aft, like the one hoss shay.

The loss of life in Death Valley and similar lone places in the desert, has been due largely to the inability of the traveler to carry enough water with him to replace the evaporation. It has been claimed that in Death Valley in midsummer the absolute zero of relative humidity exists. Birds die, even on branches to which they have flown for rest, from the too rapid evaporation of needed liquids from their little bodies. Men at Furnace Creek Ranch in the hot season have wrapped themselves in wet blankets to sleep at night; others have lain in the creek itself, with their heads propped above the water. Small wonder is it then that the foolhardy who venture across that inferno in summer sun so often find their graves in that pitiless land. If God spares me, I shall tell you some day of a few of these who gambled with the

terrors of Death Valley, and won. And of many who lost. Some desert men fear that treacherous sink; we all respect it.

And on the beauty of his surroundings, the Padre defended his desert and pointed out to his readers what they may have missed:

January 5, 1936. Dwellers on the desert know that mountains are never the same in the morning as in the late afternoon, in winter as in spring. It is precisely this incessant change, this kaleidoscopic shifting of hue and shadow that is lost by the casual visitor who asks, "What do men see out here? How monotonous!" Whatever may be said of our sage-strewn valleys and rimming hills, monotony is the least true.

It takes hills to make a dawn, and the more hills the more glory. And the desert, again contrary to accepted notions of those who have not known it, has as many raw and beaten ridges as it has baked and treeless wastes. I have watched the stars grow dim above the Funerals, the Panamints, and the Inyos at the close of uncounted nights, and never has a dawn been just as that of yesterday or yesteryear. The salmon galleons of cloud are never identical, nor headed for the same ethereal haven. The archipelagoes of the sky have never been charted, thank God, so that the voyager of the dawn may gaze forever on new peaks rising from golden lagoons, strain his ear for the thunder of mauve billows bursting on the great atolls of heaven.

The chance riser may miss completely the marvel of the second coming of the sun, its first caress of the mountain tops, across the intervening hollow. He is not accustomed to turning his back upon a sunrise, and hence will not glimpse the glory behind him. First, as on Mts. Whitney or Corcoran in the Sierra Nevada, a pink fleck sparkles on the now grey summit. Then, the sun itself still invisible behind the Inyos, its swift pencils fill in the outline of the peak in glittering orange and rose. For a minute, it would seem as if the range had begun to burst into bloom, the still dark, encrusting canyons reluctant to release the giant bud peering above the frowning wall. Relentlessly the glow spreads downward, paling as it flows, until, as if a cyclopean stage electrician had shouted, "Full up!" the steel-blue sun leaps over the crest and warmth and life have come to the desert.

Sunset, particularly in the Owens Valley, is in many respects the exact reversal of dawn. As Apollo drops in the western sky, the shadow of the backbone of America creeps across the valley floor, each peak distinctly discernible in its silhouette upon the sand. Stealthily dusk comes to home after home in the town below, then worms its way through the willows by the river. Now the ragged-edged pall is being pulled up the tawny flanks of Cerro Gordo and New York Butte, until at last their very tips become incandescent in the afterglow. Minutes, nay seconds, later, the fire has gone, and timid stars come forth on the very spot where danced the sun 12 hours ago.

So sheer is our western wall that we in Owens Valley know but little twilight. Our days as our lives, unvarnished, undiluted, and complete.

I recall a scene on an eastern stage some 25 years past. The name of the play has escaped me. Perhaps it was *Arizona* or *The Girl of the Golden West*. In front of the back-drop, a serrated range of mountains had been fashioned out of cardboard, or some similar material, and as the scene progressed an amber light behind this silhouette faded into a silver radiance and the foots were blotted out. The curtain fell upon a fawn foreground, merging into deep brown foothills that sank into a lavender veil hung from a belt of black velvet. Only by raising your eyes from the torn etching of this Stygian mountain wall to the zenith could you see any blue in the sky at all, a faint azure border for the argent backing. I never forgot the scene. Never either did I believe it to be more than an artist's triumph until I stood one evening at Swansea and watched, in wordless wonder the repetition of that tableau in exact detail on the western side of the Owens Valley. I have never lost my awe at its beholding, for the black velvet-covered cardboard is a hundred miles long and three miles high. A fool, alone, who says in his heart that there is no God, can look on the Sierra Nevada at sundown and not praise Him whose feet are upon the mountains.

Nor can you walk abroad these moonlit nights and look upon that unending, league-deep valance of snowy lace athwart the night, without a tightening of the chest. There are times in a man's life when it seems as if his heart must burst its bounds. In Inyo we have our moments.

He admired, too, the survival techniques of desert plants:

May 28, 1939. The cactus is not the only desert plant that develops spines. There are several varieties that have thus learned to defend themselves against evaporation, for in a land where water is without price the sun must be kept at his distance. Thus many others, as the creosote, have grown a shiny leaf, still others a coating of hair. Actual leaves diminish and become transformed into spines and bristles. This struggle for existence is most marked in the spacing of the shrubs on Panamint and Death Valley floors. There are areas where they are set so precisely apart, like holes in a Chinese checkerboard, that you would swear they had been planted by one versed in setting out orchards. Yet this separation, frequently 40 or 50 feet in every direction, is due entirely to a root system which must spread over a territory extensive enough to provide moisture for its owner. When that territory has been tapped another plant will set up housekeeping the proper distance away. If it tried a nearer approach it would never reach maturity. This is Socialism with a vengeance.

I spoke to Mark Kerr, who knows more about plants than most of us, relative to the phenomenon of wild flowers and shrubs growing more

vigorously and profusely along the edge of our state highways than elsewhere. My explanation was that the rain falling on the road could not penetrate the pavement and ran off to furnish an extraordinary supply for the vegetation fortunate enough to be near. Mark agreed, but added his surmise that the additional space beneath the pavement which no plant could preempt for itself furnished a secret larder from which the neighbors helped themselves. This fact may lead some farseeing soul to scatter wildflower seeds along the desert highway's edge, for there they can best flourish and give greatest pleasure to man.

Spring at Wildrose deserved a note:

May 28, 1939. There really are wild roses at Wildrose, and they are blooming now. They form a chaparral at the junction of the Telescope and Emigrant Spring roads, just below the CCC camp. More precisely, they are in Tom Devine's front yard. They are there because there the water gathers from the mountains behind, to trickle a few feet and disappear for half a mile, spring out again from behind a rock near Si Babcock's place, then vanish completely. Eastward from Si's there is not a drier canyon in all the world, yet there this week you will behold Panamint daisies, sticking out of the cliffs like nuggets. Only here can they be found, and here only now. For he must be a botanist who can tell you the name of the chattering skeletons that soon will stand by the road's edge, when spring has gathered up her skirts and hied to some mountain meadow. Brave phacelias lose themselves in the purple shadows here also, and there are pincushions of encelia and primroses. They too shall become wraiths ere another moon, and only the somber creosote and the hoary desert holly shall remain to lean towards one another and nod reminiscently of faded glories and flamboyant youth. They know.

In Wildrose Wash, and others of the Panamints, cactus abounds. Here the cholla is rare, but beaver-tail and cotton-top are always in sight. Now the beaver-tail is budding its buds, clinging like those little Norman tower lookouts to the edge of the parent leaf, peering over the summit. The cotton-top, the *Echinocactus polycephalus* of the learned men, presents a formidable porcupine front to any attacker. Its spines are as hard as bone. Yet, seen from afar its many clustered heads look for all the world like an inverted bunch of gigantic Malaga grapes, ruddy hue and all.

Desert winds were almost constant occurrences in his life:

May 24, 1936. The wind has been favoring us for a fortnight, first from the north for a day or two, then from the south with equal vigor. Bing Crosby's company did not fancy it much, and the local fruitgrowers, none of whom

has more than a half dozen trees, watched in despair the nubbins that the frost had missed drop from the seared branches. Most of us are so accustomed to this movement of air in the grand manner that we comment upon it only when it stops blowing. Personally, I have little objection, for the democratic breezes carry my rubbish pile to Bishop or Olancha, as the weather-vane veers, and leave instead a portion of their harvest from other backyards, a never uninteresting crop. Thus last week I garnered a copy of the *Reader's Digest* and a few pages from the dailies, a bit late, but new enough for an old man.

Then, referring to the movie companies in the Alabama Hills:

February 9, 1935. I chuckled as I watched the huge airplane propellers, mounted on trucks creating a synthetic sandstorm. If the Lord had not been kind enough to send them perfect days, and one of our south winds had broken loose, trucks and propellers would have been thoroughly sanded, perhaps barricaded, by flying particles of Owens Lake bottom. Our winds have never been dignified with distinctive titles, such as monsoons, simoons, and typhoons, but we have nothing to be ashamed of in our facilities for moving large bodies of air from one place to another in a hurry. While a little cramped as to directions, Mojave being the only spot where the wind blows from all points of the compass at once, our winds do not scatter their energies, but, gathering every stray gale from the Gulf of California to Canada, course up and down the valley for days at a time.

I have heard some of my partners claim that the wind blows from the south till it reaches the North Pole, then turns around, races down through the gap again, laden with chilblains and frostbite. Whatever the cause, I know that the newspapers enjoy a greater circulation hereabouts than in much more densely settled areas. Today you may find your favorite daily or weekly anchored beneath a sagebrush at Little Lake, tomorrow it may rest against a fence in Big Pine. It may be a month before the copy reaches Keeler, but reach there it does. And I have seen empty gasoline cans gliding in one of these zephyrs, hitting the ground every 30 feet or so for a fresh takeoff, while cars struggled in low gear against the current of air.

But the wind we fear in this country comes not from the north or the south, which winds are common because of the way the valley lies. But when from some Aeolian cave in the fastness of the Sierra a gale roars down the eastward canyons, we hie for the cellar. For we have not forgotten the night of the big wind in the twenties. Then, in an hour, great pines crashed all the way from Bishop to Mono; houses near Aberdeen were folded up like cookie boxes and spread over the valley floor. The Alabamas sheltered Lone Pine from the direct breath of the blast, but in Independence auto fenders rolled up like shavings from a plane. Windows collapsed in the new court-

house, wire lath partitions cracked, and books from the judge's desk were driven, wedge-fashion, into the cracks. Telegraph poles were polished like billiard balls by the flying sand. Barbed wire was ripped from fences and carried across the highway. Auto Club enamel signs, on two-inch pipe standards, were bent to the ground, tulips in the breeze. Not a life was lost, but many a homeless one literally clung to his native soil that terrible night, for naught else was stable, and much of that was in motion. In an Independence garage a group had gathered for mutual solace and safety. The westward-facing doors began to bulge inward under the tremendous pressure. Then every car in the building was driven, either against the door, or to support cars that held the front line. All were placed in low gear. When the frightened watchers beheld that mass of steel being pushed back, inch by inch, one piteous cry broke out. "Hey, do any of you fellows know a prayer? For God's sake, say it now!" Westwinds in Inyo, we class as unusual weather. One night in Mojave I saw a passenger step off a train, to be caught by a hurrying gust and slammed back against the car. As soon as he could battle his way to the lee of the waiting-room door (all entrances in well-constructed buildings in Mojave have doors facing in two directions, the Catholic church having three such) he gasped to the nonchalant brakeman, "Does it always blow like this here?" "No, sir. Sometimes it's worse!"

Inyokel observed the plant especially beloved by the wind:

April 11, 1937. The March winds and this free and open land are most hospitable to them, direct the tumbleweeds in a merry dance. Every fence and sheltered ditch is piled high with the airy spheres, which have been uprooted by the gales and roll aimlessly on till they meet an obstruction. Six and seven feet high they gather along the highways, and scatter in a moment when the wind veers. I have seen them roll from east to west a few yards ahead of my path, and at the same moment a quarter of a mile away tumble from west to east as a gust swept out of a canyon. There is something droll and almost human about their progress, seeming for an instant as if about to settle down on their haunches, then suddenly off with a bounce again to pastures new. Except for the fact that they seldom drag trailers behind them, their behavior is quite American. I wonder if I could initiate a movement to have the tumbleweed made our national flower?

South of Lone Pine is the area of the craters at Little Lake. The Padre found the area's geology fascinating and shared it with his readers:

March 20, 1938. As you drive north on U.S. highways 6 and 395–these two arteries join forces about two miles south of Inyo County line–you must traverse a narrow gateway through which the road, the Los Angeles aque-

duct, the railroad, and the power lines all enter Owens Valley. On your right rises a 100-foot wall of malpais, the black and chocolate fossil of a river of lava that flowed not many centuries ago from the craters behind Little Lake. You can still see the craters, with the overflow of molten rock clearly etched against the sage-strewn slopes down which it spilled, like the slopping over of a Cyclopean paint pot. Geologists say that the abrupt scarp of lava at this point is the result of a meeting between two rivers, one of ice from the Sierran ice-cap, the other of fire from the volcanoes to the east of Owens Valley. At the foot of this cliff, 100 yards above the portal, lies a shallow spring-fed body of water, less than a square mile in extent. Upon it the mudhens and the migrant ducks find the only haven for many leagues. The early Mexicans called the spot Lagunitas, but their prosaic successors translated it into Little Lake. Beyond the lagoon the hills draw away again, but as they part they leave the plain spattered with lava upthrusts and cinder cones, one of the latter lifting its concave crests several hundred feet above the countryside. This carmine pompon on the earth's brown bosom is but another of the relics of the day when Mother Nature's cauldron brewed and bubbled in Southern Inyo.

Turn east after you have driven some five miles northward and you will find yourself in the Coso region, Vulcan's own show window. Coso was the Paiute word for fire, which tells the tale. What fire has not melted in this area it has scorched. Up a canyon to the left you see a lighter patch upon the dun hillside. This is the pumice quarry, whence this porous volcanic rock is taken to a drying and screening mill 11 miles away on the railroad for shipping to all the world. It is the principal component of acoustic plaster, and now this air-conditioned and insulated age has found it excellent for keeping in and out both sound and heat. Imagine a volcano's doing that!

Off to the right, on the abandoned road to Little Lake, not far from where the famous, or infamous, Vasquez and his robber band wore a trail six inches deep across the upland, you come, if you know the path, upon the mountain of glass. Yes, just as in the old fairy tales, in which Prince Charming rode through canyons where the sun never shone, by lakes that seethed in agony from the sorcerer's incantations, picking a precarious course over a peak of pure glass as black as night–that is Coso. For Obsidian Cliff flashes in the sun from a hundred thousand facets, the glossy and keen-edged fragments of this slag from Vulcan's forge.

If you are curious as to the great still atop the rainbow mound on the descending road, inquiry will reveal that here they distill the mountain into mercury, for much of the gaudy coloring is that of cinnabar, the mother ore of that elusive stuff which keeps doctors and weather prophets from breaking all the Commandments. A weird place this Coso!

But it is only when you stand at the edge of the boiling paint pots of Coso Hot Springs that the full significance of the Indian name sinks in upon you. This is truly the home of fire. Well over an acre of mud–red,

green, brown, and gray–and a legion of combinations of colors are boiling before your eyes. Even outside the fence, which the owners have erected to keep the unwary sightseers from stepping into a stew-kettle that would, as it has with some unfortunates, literally cook the flesh off their bones, you may find a jet of steam tickling your sole through the hole in your shoe. Do not let the green grass deceive you. The innocuous-looking vent in the midst of the sward is belching invisible steam, and at any moment may emit a roaring geyser, although not for long. There was once a district attorney, and also once the son of an athletic evangelist famed for his denunciation of the demon rum, who fell into this enclosure in an illuminated moment, and had a very, very bad time. They had come to Coso to sweat out other brews and found the cure worse than the disease.

The therapeutic qualities of this water and mud, plus the usual hot bath procedure followed in spas throughout the world, effect some remarkable results. I have personally beheld men, who came on stretchers, run about like boys after a stay of a few weeks. For stomach ailments there certainly is something in the process which helps severe cases. Just what is the secret is for medical men to say. But Coso is just beginning to be known, for accommodations in past years have been negligible. The Jews, as in many other instances, have been among the first to appreciate its value, and Mr. Daly, who with his wife conduct the main establishment there, tell me that some of the Chosen People who came annually for the cure bring their own rabbi to kill their chickens. At such times Coso's kosher.

Of course, stories cling to such a spot, such as the legend of the little Englishman brought here by two old miners to try the baths. His companions told him that it was best to dig a hole and then permit himself to be covered with hot mud, leaving only his head above the surface. They buried him thus and repaired to their tent, where they proceeded to imbibe of the good whiskey the visitor had brought along. Time passed, day gave way to night, and night unto day, but it was nearly a week before their brains cleared enough to recall their patient. Alas, when they reached the place of his internment the coyotes had eaten off his head!

In Coso, too, the story originated of the chap with the ailing liver who came to drink and perspire. So complete was his recovery that when he died years later, his friends had to perform an autopsy and club his liver to death.

The Padre was always first to host visiting priests and scientists since they knew he would appreciate their presence. In fact, he often served as a guide, absorbing curious facts like a dry sponge. He reported about some of these visitors in his column which also gave him an opportunity to "gripe" a little about his "humdrum" life as a desert pastor, especially on a torrid day in June:

June 18, 1939. The Padre was in the dumps. I could tell by the way he dried and attacked the dishes while I cleaned up the sink. His heart wasn't in his work. "Still thinking about that dog of Herbert Gwinn's?" I knew he had stopped for dinner at the Big Pine principal's home and had had a look at his magnificent malemute, an in-law of one of Father Hubbard's companions. "No, not the dog. But what the dog stands for. Just think, Inyokel, of that Padre gallivanting all over Alaska and a clutch of islands, peeking into volcanoes running under forced draught, testing his trouser-seams on the knife-edges of continents, turning around at the *Dominus vobiscum* in his Mass to say 'God be with you' to his man Friday, Ed Levin, and a spattering of penguins."–"Yeah, it's great, isn't it?" I interrupted, dropping the cover of the garbage can. He glared at me suspiciously, then resumed. "You know it's great. But look at us? Why can't you and I be hostlers to a stable of wolves and yell 'Mush' on this hellish day instead of scalding our fingers searching for a gas lock in our juggernaut on Towne's Pass, where the '49ers slept the sleep of babes because they knew not carburetors? Tell me that! Why aren't we skirting polar bears instead of pallbearers. Or why aren't we in ringside seats as icebergs crack and roar into the sea from their mother glacier instead of sweating through 'Hearts and Flowers' while a score of youngsters plunge from the dock of Alma Mater, clad in cap and gown? No romance, Inyokel, just the same old treadmill. Wish to heaven I had never seen that malemute. And then there was that Father Piet at Bakersfield last week..."

I only nodded when the Padre spoke of Father Piet for that too had been the occasion of a diatribe on our slavery to routine. He had met the little Belgian Franciscan at Father Howard's in Bakersfield, and had not been the same since. The visiting padre was in the United States for six month's study of the history of religion in America, including all the Protestant sects as well as the Catholic faith. A few years back he became famed as the author of a study of John Wesley and Methodism, a work which Father Howard had translated into English and which was so photographically historical that it was adopted by the Methodists as an official chronicle. Now he was continuing this research in the New World, bringing the story down to the latest reunion of the branches of Methodism. Our Padre was agog with the interesting sidelights the son of St. Francis had already unearthed, but he was mostly peeved. "Imagine, being given six months or a year to do nothing but read what you wanted, when you and I can't get the wrappers off four papers and magazines for six months after they arrive."I said nothing, therefore, nothing at all, when the next morning's mail brought a visiting card, and the afternoon bus the card's owner. The card ran "Gilbert Rahm, O.S.B., M.D., Ph. D., University of Fribourg, Switzerland; Maria Laach Abbey, Germany." This padre wrote that he was interested in "Tardigrades, Nematodes, and Rotifers, especially such as live under extreme conditions." "Look those fellows up in the parish census," was my pastor's only

comment, "I don't remember them at all. Perhaps they moved in lately." The florid Benedictine with the Van Dyke who spent the next two days with us soon disillusioned us on the residents he sought. They are microscopic animals which live in lichens and mosses on rocks and soil, and have been under observation for years because they may compel us to revise our definition of life. For Father Rahm himself has frozen them solid with liquid air and liquid helium, and after 20 months of this vitrification, has thawed them back to life and action. He has heated them to 400 degrees in an oven and instantaneously frozen them with liquid helium, and Tardigrade, Nematode, and Rotifer have stepped out smiling just like Sidrach, Misach, and Abednago from Nebuchodonosor's particular hell. So, fresh from the Gobi and the Sahara deserts, and after a fling at the Atacama waste in Chile and Nullarber Plain in Australia, Dr. Rahm descended upon Death Valley and us, hard upon the heels of Father Hubbard's malemute and Father Piet's sabbatical leave. I feared the worst.

The Padre drove him to Wildrose, where the scientist chuckled over the discovery of some mosses which he was certain harbored his little friends. On to Mahogany Flat after chatting with Supt. Goodwin, who admitted that the government had not gotten around to the study of microscopic life in Death Valley yet. The German Benedictine, who was born in China, educated in France, and teaches in Switzerland, started out on the Telescope Peak trail while the Padre searched for crow's nests and stone-crops. Taking a short cut, the world-girdler lost his way and clambered back over Roger's Peak with more specimens and a report of myriads of lady-bugs apparently blown on the mountain top by a storm. Aguereberry Point and Emigrant Springs furnished their share of things their pastor never suspected till then, and at eventide the two shepherds returned home dusty and thirsty, with moss tucked in every crevice. The actual descent into the floor of Death Valley was postponed until fall, as the mercury read 106 at the 3,000-foot contour, with the valley lost in heat a half-mile haze below.

Knowing the Padre, I knew that he would never have asked, in holy horror, the question put to Dr. Rahm by a mother provincial of a California religious community. "What did you say you were looking for? Worms and bugs? You, a Benedictine priest!" "But, Mother, they too are God's creatures." No, our Padre found no fault; rather did he sit and listen like a lad at the feet of an old tar to the tales his brother told of the Mongols, of the Tierra del Fuegans, of Mahatma Gandhi and the Himalayas. I thought, "If the Padre ever returns to Lone Pine after this flight around the world on the magic carpet of fancy there will be no living with him." After hearing, for instance, how Sir Rammer, Nobel prize-winner, Oxford graduate, inducted Father Rahm into the home life of the Hindu. The Indian scientist's wife, herself a high-caste Brahmin, but lower than her spouse, must always walk behind him, and she served the priest and her husband at table from behind

by pouring the food over their fingers. Knives and forks were forbidden, and so was the use of the left hand, as Father Rahm discovered when the shocked Indian begged him never to use the unclean member at his meals. "It was interesting, and the food was well prepared, but after a day or so you got tired of the sloppiness. But it was not so disgusting as the experience with the Mongols on the Gobi desert. These greasy and grimy bewhiskered gentlemen consider it the essence of hospitality to lick every dish that they pass you to use, and God help you if you resent this favor. I recall that Mahatma Gandhi, to whom Sir Rammer introduced me, asked me if I could not develop some specific in the laboratory which would enable him to do without sleeping or eating, upon which he wasted so much valuable time. I understand that he reads the Sermon on the Mount daily, and when I called he was deep in his second reading of *The Autobiography of the Little Flower.*"

We sat far into the night hearing how Harvard and California plan to expose the Tardigrades et al to 15 million volts, of how Professor Picard took some of them into the stratosphere, and of a tangle between the doctor and a Dominican philosopher on the possibility of latent life. And we went to bed laughing as he finished off with the relation of a custom down in Tierra del Fuego, where the expectant mother goes into the forest to have her baby, and when she returns with it to take up her daily tasks the husband goes to bed for a week."If puerperal fever were that contagious in America," I mused, "Papa Dionne would have passed into a coma."

11

DESERT DRIVING

The Padre traveled so often over the dirt roads to Death Valley and throughout Owens Valley that he was in good position to give expert advice on desert driving and its hazards. Four-wheel drive vehicles were as yet unknown, as were air-conditioners, cellular phones and, in many cases, even car heaters.

February 14, 1937. Cars from Inyo can be readily recognized these days by the piece of newspaper, oil-cloth, sacking, fragment of comforter, or carpet fastened to the radiator. The extreme cold makes this necessary to secure proper combustion, and also to render useful the hot-water heaters installed in many of the machines. Some drivers do not care for heaters, on the ground that their use makes the man at the wheel sleepy in long night drives, whereas cold feet help to keep one awake. To this I can personally add "Amen." But car heaters have saved lives and prevented much suffering in hours and days of snow blockade, and are well worth the cost, which is always additional in California-delivered cars, for who ever heard of frost in this terrestrial paradise?

Dr. Dueker told me on a recent 60-mile visit to the sick together that he found sitting on his hand and pinching himself effective in keeping him awake, that, when he could either no longer pinch himself, or feel the pinch, he stopped and took a nap. This is a new addition to my repertory of schemes, all tried and found wanting, such as whistling, singing, and stopping to take a little walk along the road. (If you can stop before you turn over or hit a tree.) Coffee used to help, and does help others, but I must have become immunized to it through the years. Not even a much-publicized anti-sleep pill, "Nap-Not," which is not its name, proves uniformly effective. Besides, I have lost much faith in it since a friend informed me that its creator was killed in the Sierra a year ago by crashing off the road while asleep at the wheel. Perhaps the Doc is right. He says "You can not battle nature with impunity." Well, I guess I have tried everything else but that.

The desert can be life-threatening for a traveler with little knowledge and preparation. Inyokel provided some helpful tips for the unwary:

July 31, 1938. A young fellow hopped off from Santa Monica a few days back, stopped at New York, and landed a little later in Ireland. In the same week two mining engineers set out from Los Angeles for Death Valley. One of them reached help at Cave Springs after a harrowing trek from the broken-down car. The other was found two days later in the characteristic posture of those who die of thirst on the desert–naked, face down, fingers worn to the bone in mad search for water. A reckless lad leaped o'er land and sea while a seasoned traveler had the life burned out of him in California. Strange pranks of fate! One man with a chocolate bar skims a quarter way 'round the earth; another drags a couple of cans of tomato juice to his rendezvous of death on a well-worn road. Water for Corrigan would have meant death, for Van Tyne life.

Many a time I have repeated herein that you cannot trust the desert. She is Medusa, Lorelei, Circe, and vampire according to her mood. She allures by sight and sweet song, she lulls her victims into moments of unwariness, she turns them into petrified corpses or battens on their blood. The wild-flower guides distributed by the gasoline companies say nothing of what dwells in the waste places after the blossoms have withered. Yet where this man dug for the water with delirious eyes, primroses and coreopsis and verbena spattered the sand last April. Next spring, as in springs past, poppies will spurt scarlet from rubble-strewn mounds that are there because the desert does not always spurt poppies. So beware! If you must come this way when the sun is a peep-hole in the sky through which you glimpse an incandescent lake beyond, come over the main highways. If some grave need compels your coming by another route, say one that is thrown like a piece of brown twine across the hills, then inform your friends and the police or park ranger of your departure and arrival. Bring gas, but even more oil in proportion, and most of all, water. Ten gallons of water is not too much to carry in the trunk or between the seats. A canteen is valuable, canned tomatoes are splendid. A shovel may mean the difference between life and death, a map should be in your pocket if this is your first journey. Try to drive in the cool of the day or at night, and, if trouble comes, do not attempt to walk for help in the heat. Rest in your car until sundown, then strike out for civilization. Find or build a little shelter for the next day, conserve your water, and keep your head. Most of the desert's victims have come to grief because they became excited and did not plan, or adhere to, any definite course. The hellish heat, which addles a man's brains, did the rest.

Oliver Roberts, whose reminiscences of his experience burying lost miners in Panamint have been quoted in the *Inyo Register*, sums up a few of his observations in the paragraph: "Most of the people who perish on the deserts are Frenchmen, Germans, Swedes, and Danes. The Americans, Irishmen, Scotch, and English stand the desert best. Of course the Mexicans and In-

dians are natives and seldom die on the desert, as they know when and where to travel over these places." Here is something for the ethnologists to explain. If it were entirely true it might offer a solution as to a possible refuge from certain forms of government extant across the water. When their propagandists or even their armies land on our shores and read the All Year Club ads and head for California, let us herd them into Inyo in July or August. In no time at all a lot of the isms would become just isns.

I mentioned a shovel. Innocent looking ruts are frequently bottomless, and side trips into the sage may churn up holes that will take hours to get out of. If there is a piece of gunnysacking in your car, put it under your spinning wheels. Sage or other brush is almost always available for the same purpose. Lacking those, small rocks or planks are good, if you happen to be stuck near an abandoned shack. You may have to jack up the car to lift the housing off the hump and then build a short road to terra firma before setting the wheels down again. As a last resort, and then only if you are sure you have a pump aboard, or two spares, deflate the rear tires to about 20 pounds pressure or less. The added traction thus provided will extricate most cars if the frame is not perched on a rock.

These are extraordinary means for extraordinary occasions, but they cannot be conceived unless you sit down and calmly figure out the problem and the equipment at hand. Thus Carl Nellen could find nothing else in the old 'dobe days of the Los Angeles road than a skeleton of a cow to put under his soapy tires. Some have jettisoned their overalls or other garments to furnish traction. And I, on one memorable occasion, finally jockeyed my model T out of a sand pile up on the narrow-gauge railroad and drove two bumpy miles to safety along the ties. A team of mules has proved providential in times past when ditches were high, while a gentle but irresistible push from a road scraper once lifted me out of a certain contretemps in Death Valley. Many are the perils in the way.

He related a story of his ministry in Death Valley and the perils that can be encountered on the way:

> *May 16, 1937.* Wrote the "Death Valley Rambler" in his syndicated column: "The wedding of Lupe Vasquez and Anthony Franco at Corkill Hall was the first 'church' wedding in Death Valley." He was right, but he did not tell the half of it, and now that the Padre has his car back, and the kneeling stools are here in our sanctuary at Lone Pine, and Lupe and Tony have settled down to the business of homemaking hard by the talc mine at Baker, may I tell a little of what I know about the historic ceremony?
>
> It was a bit of a chore in the first place to coax Tony over to Death Valley on the nights when the Padre was due there, for Baker is a good four-score miles away. But he came, and the Padre refreshed the boy's memory on

rusty prayers and 2,000-year-old principles, while Lupe, who had taught in our Death Valley vacation school, nodded assent. Then the date was set for the first of May, and the Padre told them to put things on in a big way, and that they could count on his co-operation to the utmost. He would even bring the prie-dieux from Lone Pine in his car, and he would rehearse all hands on the night before the marriage.

Came a letter from Tony a week before the nuptials. "Would you be good enough to buy the flowers for us in Los Angeles or have them sent? We need a bride's bouquet, one for the bridesmaid, one for each of the flower girls, and some for the altar. I shall settle with you when you come." Which explains why the pastor expostulated with two indignant florists in the City of the Angels, those gentlemen insisting that no bouquets had ever yet been fashioned that would last long enough to be presentable at a wedding in Death Valley two days hence. "All right," was the priest's desperate answer, "you furnish the flowers and the wire and the tinfoil and put them all in a box and I'll take them there, put them in water and in the refrigerator after arrival. We'll make the bouquets when we are ready." So, with the understanding that the trip would be but seven hours, the soft-hearted missionary set forth with his blooming burden at high noon. Beneath the greenery rested the kneeling stools, which had already ridden 220 miles, and were now off for an additional 300-mile jaunt.

Ten miles beyond Baker, all the water left the radiator without warning. The cause was a mystery, and on a lonely desert road at night there was no help for it. So alternately creeping and stopping, with the hoods flapping wide, the flower express crawled forward. "Yes, by all means, those flowers must be in water within seven hours." The Padre groaned, the radiator whistled, the prie-dieux nestled closer. At Shoshone an hour was spent watching the boys play a round of poker in Charlie Brown's Snake Room while the engine cooled to a point where it would be safe to refill the radiator. Away into the night at 9:30. At 10 the roar of steam announced another evacuation. And so, thanks to a heaven-sent breeze, the flower-bearer drew into Death Valley Junction near the midnight hour, where the night watchman aided in rounding up jars and pails and setting the now fabulously precious blossoms in the hotel icebox.

Movies are shown in Death Valley but once a week, so it was well towards 10 on Friday night before the bridal party could enter the hall for rehearsal. There, before the table altar built by the railroad carpenters last year, now set on the stage, the pastor patiently reminded Tony that he should genuflect on his right, and not on his left knee, warned the little ring-bearer to avoid stepping on Lupe's train, cautioned Lupe against racing down the aisle. "The ribbon, Father, shall we use it?" "Of course, have you one?" "Yes, but how do we put it on?" Lupe referred to the Mexican custom of linking the couple together with a wide white ribbon immediately after the words of marriage have been pronounced, this bond being worn during the Mass.

"Oh,"came an answer, "why not put it around Tony's neck and you take the other end and lead him down the aisle." I knew the Padre was having his little joke, for he had told me many moons ago about his first experience with a ribbon hitch. Then the Confessions, behind the wing curtain, after which Tony and Lupe drove the round trip to Baker to meet her sister, who was due on the morning train.

But everything went off splendidly. Early in the morning, the bridesmaid, with an occasional suggestion from the pastor, fashioned the bouquets. The town was scoured for vases and candlesticks and somewhere the flower girls unearthed two white pillows that looked rather alike. Mrs. Gower, good Methodist wife of the superintendent, who has never heard of the Gregorian White List, played the "Wedding March" from "Lohengrin" on the hall piano as they entered, Mendelssohn as they marched forth in triumph. Tony genuflected on the wrong knee, the ring-bearer stepped on the train, Lupe got out of step. But the ribbon, stamped with their names, was a hit, and the transformation of the stage into a sanctuary will be told about many a hearth from generation unto generation.

Of course, because he had a rare congregation, the Padre preached a bit. I recall that he hoped the visitors had noticed there were no "ifs" in the ceremony, that these young people had said, "I take you until death" without adding either "if we have no children" or "if we get along" or "if you can get me a new car or radio" or "if I don't find someone else I like better." Each of them, he said, was handing Almighty God a blank check this morning, a check signed with their signature, and saying, "You fill it in. We'll stick by this bargain, whatever the future may hold." Future? Little did the Padre foresee how in a few hours his old steed would give out on top of Towne's Pass and he would have to thumb a ride home, leaving the priedieux to bleach in the desert sun until Howard Ellis could go out to repair the radiator two days later. Ah, yes, it was a great wedding, that of Lupe and Tony, and God bless them.

Being on the road so much, the Padre dedicated one column to the kindly help he and others received when needed:

> *January 12, 1936.* Not every city dweller will pass a stalled autoist in the desert without a shouted "Trouble?" but it is a safe wager that the driver who thus races by unseeing is not an inhabitant of the great open spaces. For not even the grimy bewhiskered engineer of our worst rattle-trap would fail to slow up beside the parked Rolls-Royce in Panamint or on Mt. Montgomery, and, shifting his quid, venture, "Kin I help, pardner?" The desert is like that, or rather, the desert makes men like that. Where your nearest neighbor is 30 miles away in another canyon, you begin to understand what "Love they neighbor" means. Too, when you have struggled under a relent-

less sun for hours in a heart-breaking attempt to dig your car out of the sand, and succeed only when the first driver to come along puts his shoulder behind your spare tire and pushes, you are not likely to forget your experience when you see another "forlorn and shipwrecked brother." If necessary, you will place him upon your own beast of burden and carry him to the inn, or bind up his wounds with tire cement and pour in oil and gas. It may be your turn tomorrow.

Captain Buer of the State Highway Patrol tells me that 90 percent of the local residents dim their lights upon approaching an oncoming car, and that but 25 percent of our summer visitors are thus courteous. The cities harden the hearts of men. "Devil take the hindmost" is an almost inevitable philosophy where there is "less of giving and more of getting," and the family in the next apartment is as far from your ken as one in Irkutsk or Madagascar. It seems one must head for the open country to know what it is to "live in heart-throbs, not in figures on a dial."

I have been pushed and dragged out of bogs and washes by M.D.'s and ill-smelling hoboes, by CCC workers and state highway bulldozers. And the Padre has had a lot of fun towing carloads of jittery tourists, who, when they had reached a safe haven, were anxious to express their gratitude in cash and received a mild shock when they found that their ministering angel gave allegiance to the Pope of Rome. He likes to remember one morning years ago below Mojave, when, coatless and collarless, he dug and shivered for two hours trying to get back on the slick adobe highway. A tramp and half a dozen others swore roundly as they helped. Not until a team of mules was commandeered did the old model T consent to rise from the depths of the ditch, just at the moment when Grevy Fitzgerald drove up. "Hi, Father, trouble?" Tableau!

He related another driving incident told him by a highway engineer:

October 16, 1938. And I do not think Francis Baker's experience with two Fords has ever graced our indigenous weeklies. Well, Mr. Baker is one of the highway engineers at Bishop, and some years ago was stationed in Tuolumne County. One night, driving along in his old model T, he came upon a Cadillac bogged down in a ditch. At first he was skeptical about his ability to help, but was willing to try. Removing some strands of barbed wire from a fence he made a tow rope and tugged and spun and soon had the big car back on the highway. A tall gentleman detached himself from the group and remarked, "Great little cars, these Fords, eh?"

"Yes sir," rejoined Baker, "there's nothing like them." "Yes, I know," came the memorable reply. "My father makes them. I am Edsel Ford."

Cattle on the road were a constant threat:

April 18, 1937. If some of the readers of the *Register* wander into Inyo soon, please take heed that more than human beings love the wild flowers. I refer to the cattle now browsing on the open desert, innocuous creatures enough in daylight on an open road, but behind a curve or at night an ever-present danger. Much of Inyo is grazing land, and the highway is not fenced, so please beware of the cows. They have not yet become accustomed to our 60-mile-an-hour travelers, and the results are sometimes surprising. I counted three dead animals between Inyokern and a point 12 miles south a week ago. The cars had been hauled away.

Not long ago, one of the cooks at the Inyokern CCC camp secured a new mail order blue suit and set out for a few days' furlough, availing himself of a chance for a ride in the back of a pick-up truck en route to Bakersfield through Walker's Pass. The party bounced merrily along at a lively gait until he heard the brakes scream as they rounded a corner. Next a thud. Then a shower. That portion of a cow's makeup which usually marks her path, and only that portion, descended upon the passenger in such generous measure that one suit and one furlough were utterly ruined. P.S. –Also a truck. P.P.S.– Add one cow.

Later he commented on endurance contests, this column being written before the new Mt. Whitney-Death Valley Highway was completed:

March 15, 1936. I hear that the publicity agents for a certain popular car (I own a share in one) plan to conduct an endurance contest on the Mt.Whitney-Death Valley Highway in the near future. One of their cars is to be driven from the end of the Whitney road down to the bottom of the United States, Bad Water, in the floor of Death Valley, and back again continuously for a specified period, then carefully checked for results. Afterwards, the machine is to be painted with appropriate legends and sent on a tour of California and possibly of the Union. So, we may be seeing you, if the promoters want to take along any local exhibits. Also, if the manufacturers wish to save a lot of time, I would consider permitting the use of my CR8 for the advertising tour, as it has already made the aforesaid ups and downs beyond all endurance. As compensation, I would be satisfied with the cancellation of the uncompleted payments on my juggernaut.

Not only the desert presented hazards for the Padre:

January 10, 1937. The Padre and I were caught in the congested traffic in Los Angeles a few weeks since, and edged along behind a crowded streetcar on Figueroa Street for fully 15 minutes. In the rear vestibule was a group of

boys of 12 or 13 who had a lot of fun wise-cracking at the autoists. "Get a horse," they shouted at us as we drew close. Of course, we did not reply. But when the Padre, tiring of the pace, and hoping that better speed might be made on another artery, turned the corner of Tenth Street sharply I saw him biting his lip. Not to keep from retaliating, however, but to conceal his laughter, for the parting shot of one young comedian was, "Swing it, Reverend, swing it!"

Winter weather and winter driving were constants in the life of the Padre and also for many of his readers in Owens Valley:

February 2, 1935. God knows we are glad enough to see our prophecy of an old-fashioned winter (an inside tip from the squirrels and the piñons) fulfilled. It gladdens us all–packers, hotelmen, garage owners, cattlemen, and just plain fishermen–to watch the etiolation of our valley walls. Whitney is now coifed like a dimpled novice, the Sleeping Beauty south of Carroll Creek has become a platinum blonde. Mount Tom brings back those lines of Horace on Soracte: "See how she stands, tall, white with snow." Each hoary hollow is brimming with an alabaster freight that presages lush, flower-dappled meadows, brawling streams, and leaping trout. The Sierras hold in their laps the promise of a teeming summer.

But when the pretty flakes float down into town, cluttering up the highway, freezing on windshield wipers, and cacheing miniature glaciers under fenders, isn't it, as our English friends would say, "a bit thick?" Unaccustomed as I am to public skiing, I found myself half rolling, half sliding in my fiery chariot along the valley's length a week ago. Another who was driving, as I, with head through the window because of accumulated snow on the windshield, was pushed off the road by a third frosted chauffeur. At Olancha I tried to stop to clear my vision and promptly spun round and round like a waltzing mouse. On the main street of Bishop at midnight the rear end of my car reached the city limits before the engine. In the wee sma' hours one of the secret ambitions of my life was fulfilled. A huge oil tanker, with trailer, found it impossible to climb the Tinemaha grade because of the icy coating on the road. Lending the driver my shovel, I climbed into the cab and drove 4,500 gallons of fuel oil, inch by inch up the hill while the sweating operator tossed dirt under the roaring tires. When he weakened I spelled him a while, and thus we paid tribute to Jack Frost for a thrilling hour on an Inyo hillside. I say thrilling, for I have often wondered how it felt to have one of these behemoths, with another fastened to its tail, begin to slip backwards on a mountain side. My curiosity has been satisfied. To round out the evening I pushed a gasless motorist and his carry-all five miles into town. And so to bed. But this snow business can be a bit overdone, don't you know. Thus I mused next morning when I learned that two luckless drivers had come to a

stop on the glassy pave only after half a dozen somersaults.

I hear rumors of folks up Bishop way going in for winter sports in the grand manner. Why not? It is good to know that a skating pond is under construction near Hot Creek, and that a similar enterprise will be located in an idyllic spot at the foot of the falls in Hunters Flat, Lone Pine, next winter. These old bow-legs have never been trammeled by skis as yet, but if this exodus of my cronies and their ladies of the slopes on week-ends keeps up, I might weaken. Then, if this pile of chips fails to appear some Friday you may safely surmise that I holed in for the winter.

It is one of nature's cruel jests that in the same county where men in summer shrivel up and die of thirst others should drop into their last sleep benumbed by snow. Yet Inyo and its neighbor Mono have their grim roll of winter tragedies. There were two brothers frozen to death near Bishop a few years back, and more than one sheepherder has been found when the thaw came sitting erect by some giant pine, where he had paused for a moment's rest. Gene Crosby and a companion were caught by a storm coming over Deadman with a band of horses. Days later frantic friends who had battled through the drifts to the entrance to Long Valley beheld a wisp of smoke arising from the chimney of the Eaton Ranch miles away and knew that Gene had won through. He told me afterward that he had saved his own and his partner's life by following the telephone line to the ranch. Unable to see from one pole to the other in the blizzard, he hit upon the expedient of holding a long rod to the wires as a guide, a sort of horse-trolley. The state now keeps snow plows busy on the route that Gene traversed.

Then I remember a lad whose father managed the telephone company at one of the mining camps, Aurora, if memory does not trick me. The boy was a lineman for the company, and while on this duty was trapped by a blizzard. Unable to move in the drifts, and far from the road, he settled near the base of one of the poles. He reasoned that a searching party would naturally follow the line as soon as they could fight their way, but it would be a battle against time and death by freezing. He had with him a receiving instrument with which he could tap the wire, but could not send a message. Thus during the long vigil he had the harrowing pleasure of listening to his father and friends relaying over the line requests for and reports on knowledge of his whereabouts, while he sat mute and helpless. He was just losing consciousness when searchers stumbled on him.

Not all our ermine rests on the shoulders of the Sierra, however. The White Mountains, and particularly the great peak that gives the range its name, look like sugar-dusted loaves today. Even the black Cosos wear well-powdered pompadours. To me, desert child that I am, the most awe-inspiring of all is Telescope Peak, on the western edge of Death Valley, a cone whose 11,000 feet of elevation insure it a periwig of silver when its less stately companions are one with their russet and drab surroundings. The 70

miles of airline distance between Telescope and Lone Pine often causes the Panamint Mountains to vanish in bluish haze. It is then that you draw in your breath as you behold this argent pyramid floating in the lapis-lazuli sky without visible support, like a descending parachute or collapsed balloon.

In the late summer little snow is to be seen even on Sierra slopes as viewed from the valley. Yet I recall one scorching August afternoon, aboard the "Slim Princess," our famed narrow-gauge train, when some wilted travelers from the southland, who had probably never seen snow, were engaged in lively controversy about the white patches sparkling on Whitney's flank. "It could hardly be cotton, way up there," one argued. The conductor coming through at that moment, the problem was put up to him. With a significant look at me, which said unmistakably, "Can you beat it?" he answered with a straight face, "That? Oh, that's volcanic ash." Which apparently satisfied the tenderfeet, who would have doubted his veracity, and perhaps sanity, if he had told them that the chalky spots were snow banks a mile wide and that at the moment the wind whistling across them would set your teeth to chattering, if you, and the teeth, happened to be in the vicinity.

12

STORY TELLERS

The Padre was a voracious reader, evidenced by his frequent literary references. He wanted his parishioners and readers to be aware of the treasures that lie between the covers of books. One of his favorite authors was Mary Austin:

> *September 2, 1934.* Mary Austin is dead. To our poor mind she had long stood forth as one of the masters, or mistresses, of our language, and one critic has called her the greatest American word craftsman. She wrote much after leaving Inyo, and her philosophy might not, and unquestionably did not, please many, but we can never forget her. Here she dwelt, a humble school teacher in Independence and Lone Pine; here she immortalized the latter as *El Pueblo de las Uvas*. Here fame found her in her *Land of Little Rain*. She knew us before we had lost our birthright of green swales and laughing rivers, and she wove them into her *Water Borders*. It is hard to think that this wizardry in words is ended. With a true artist's knowledge of color and a fearsome certainty of touch possessed only by the elect, such as Pierre Loti, Lafcadio Hearn and Willa Cather, she transformed California from a lifeless outline on the map to a Maxfield Parrish fairy land of sapphire seas, golden slopes, beckoning purple canyons and shimmering mirage."The land of the sun," she wrote, "expands the soul." May the God whom she glimpsed and the glory of whose handiwork she limned so truly give that great soul rest in meadows eternal, whose beauty "eye hath not seen nor ear heard."
>
> She found herself in Inyo, as she hints in one description of sagebrush country. "There is a Paiute proverb to the effect that no man should attempt the country east of the Sierras until he has learned to sleep in the shade of his arrows. This is a picturesque way of saying that he must be able to reduce his wants to the limit of necessity. Those who have been able to do so, and have trusted the land to repay them, have discovered that the measure is over-full. A man may not find wealth there, nor too much of food even, but he often finds himself, which is much more important."
>
> The Padre thinks that Mary Austin's description of the Lone Pine that was is one of the finest pieces of genre writing in English. He likes to quote her description of the First Communion class and he believes that God will not be too hard on a woman who could write thus of a faith that was alien to

her. "I used to peek in at them, ever so softly, in Dona Ina's living room; Raphael-eyed little imps, going sidewise on their knees to rest them from the bare floors, candles lit on the mantel to give a religious air and a great sheaf of wild bloom before the Holy Family. Come Sunday they set out the altar in the school house, with the fine-drawn altar cloths, the beaten silver candlesticks and the wax images, chief glory of Las Uvas, brought up mule back from Old Mexico 40 years ago. All in white, the communicants go up two and two in a hushed, sweet awe to take the Body of their Lord, and Tomaso, who is priest's boy, tries not to look unduly puffed up by his office. After that you have dinner and a bottle of wine that ripened on the sunny slope of Escondito. All the week Father Shannon has shriven his people, who bring clean conscience to the betterment of appetite, and the father sets them an example. Father Shannon is rather big about the middle to accommodate the large laugh that lives in him, but a most shrewd searcher of hearts. It is reported that one derives comfort from his confessional, and I for my part believe it.

"...I am persuaded only a complex soul can get any good of a plain religion. Your earth-born is a poet and a symbolist. We breed in an environment of asphalt pavements a body of people whose creeds are chiefly restrictions against other people's way of life, and have kitchens and latrines under the same roof that house their God. Such as these go to church to be edified, but at Las Uvas they go for pure worship and to entreat their God. The logical conclusion of the faith that every good gift cometh from God is the open hand and the finer courtesy. The meal done without buys a candle for the neighbor's dead child. You do foolishly to suppose that the candle does no good... Come away, you who are obsessed with your own importance in the scheme of things, and have nothing you did not sweat for, come away by the brown valleys and full-bosomed hills to the even-breathing days, to the kindliness, earthiness, ease of *El Pueblo de Las Uvas*."

And in another tribute:

February 7, 1937. The late Mary Austin is unquestionably the greatest teller of tales that Inyo has known, and her descriptions of "this long, brown, and lonely land" are alike marvels of accuracy and limpid English prose. She laid no claim to be an historian; in fact, she deliberately used false names for participants in incidents we all know well, but she left us pictures of Lone Pine and Independence in their heyday that live and speak. Notable particularly are *The Land of Little Rain*, *The Basket Woman*, and *The Ford*, with her autobiography, *Earth Horizon*, supplying the background for the former fictional and descriptive sketches. (Houghton Mifflin). But Mary Austin wrote nothing about Death Valley.

One of the early Mexican parishioners who lived at the time of the Pueblo de Las Uvas is featured in the following account:

April 9, 1939. "There goes Annie," I mused observing the stooped figure of the little old lady outlined in the church doorway. The Padre looked up from his writing and smiled. He always smiled when he saw Annie Romero, whether her bent shoulders matched the curve of Whitney's summit as she bobbed her head in a mock serious castigation of Aunt Elsa after Mass or whether she plodded her lonely mile from home to town, her basket drawn to her side. For to the Padre Annie spelled all that he could ask for in fidelity to the faith of her fathers, plus all that was noblest in the story of Lone Pine, the *Pueblo de las Uvas*. If her feeble feet were still set down with a decision that indicated that they had not been accustomed to being budged, and if her advice to the younger generation, from six to 60, came forth with the rattle of a machine gun and the authority of royalty, the Padre grinned and whispered admiringly, "I'd like to have known her in her prime!" If his dog Tray comes home with his ears drooping, his tail hidden beneath his belly, and bearing the general look of a meat roll, the pastor knows that the terrier has been caught chasing Annie's hens and has been peppered with a few loads of impeccable Spanish, descriptive small shot by a lady who used to teach Spanish in an old Spanish town. And if the Padre turns to give the congregation the Benediction at Mass and glimpses a sour-faced 13-year old lassie, he guesses that she has just received a poke in the back from the apparently absorbed duenna who refused to let her stay seated during the blessing. I often think the Padre secretly approves of Annie's doings. May God forgive me for talking about a priest, but I can't help wondering if some day he is not going to shout, "Bravo!" when Annie pins a squirming urchin to the pew during the sermon. Yet Annie was married before the justice of the peace! When I remarked on this fall from grace one day to the Padre, I learned some theology. "What would you have done?" he demanded. "A priest used to visit Inyo about once in ten years when Annie came to Lone Pine from San Jose in 1880. She and her mother made the journey in a two-horse wagon driven by Santos Ramirez. Remember Santos? Half blind, he had no difficulty, for the horses knew the way, and no one could miss the ruts. Annie's father had been in Lone Pine for three years previously, in fact was notary and justice of the peace up at Cerro Gordo. When she met Romero priests were coming a trifle oftener, sometimes once a year, but with no certainty. So marriages, when they were celebrated at all, usually took place before the judge, and the priest fixed things up when he appeared. Annie and her spouse actually drove to Santa Paula later to have their union blessed. Did you know, Inyokel, that the Church permits marriages before two witnesses even without the presence of a priest under such circumstances?" He was taking Annie's part again.

Mary Austin has told, in her *Land of Little Rain*, how the Catholic faith was kept alive in Lone Pine at the close of the 19th century. Those who knew her have no difficulty in recognizing "Old Lady Arambula" in Dona Ina, whom the novelist pictures as gathering young and old at her dwelling and leading them in prayers and devotions suited to the time, before an improvised altar or shrine. There the children are prepared for First Communion against the coming of Father Bannon or another missionary from Los Angeles or Visalia. There the older boys and men knelt in the garden when the crowd overflowed the parlor, and Annie, because of her clear enunciation and special gift for language, read from a prayerbook or led in the litany. When the priest came they set up an altar in one of the saloons, either Fuentes' or Carrasco's, or in Palmer's dance hall. Once on a memorable day, when Bishop Montgomery visited Inyo, they had Confirmation in the town hall behind the Chinaman's, followed by a big dinner beneath the trees.

To Mrs. Arambula Lone Pine owes the little church that serves her great-grandchildren today, for not only by her keeping alive the spark of faith but by her leadership in raising funds for the building did it ever come into existence, long years after her death. Everyone attended the bazaars conducted for the purpose, non-Catholics as well as the children of Old Mexico. Of course when the Protestants ran an affair the Catholics all turned out, too. Annie once counted as a pupil in Spanish the Methodist minister, "a big man, but not much at Spanish," she says. She also recalls taking the part of a widow in the play the natives put on for the church fund in Palmer's hall, which stood on the site of the present Standard service station. The performance was in Spanish, of course, and proved profitable. The name has been forgotten and the lines, but Annie does recall that her hair at that time was golden and came to her knees. Which undoubtedly contributed no little to the success of the performance, and eventually to the coming of Santa Rosa Church.

Annie has never seen Bishop, 60 miles to the north of us, nor Big Pine, much nearer. Independence she has visited twice, each time with her father. Darwin she knows only by repute and from the stories told her by Ned Reddy's wife, who became her neighbor in Lone Pine. Yet the canyons of Beveridge and the Keynot and the famous Cerro Gordo she knew well, for there the men worked, thence Lone Pine drew its livelihood in those mining days. Her world was no smaller than that of those around her, and she looked up at the same snow-crested wall of the Sierra then, as now, bent over more beautiful roses, danced to livelier tunes, and found plenty of time for laughter and reason to laugh. Her loom stands idle most of the time now, but when she does sit down to weave again in the twilight, what dreams and memories she must wrap in the woof as she shuttles it across the warp of the years! Only her cat, who knows but Spanish and cannot hear that for the ticks in his bedraggled ears, is there for company, but Annie is not alone.

She walks again the river to fish for catfish with Carmelita or Catalina. Or she is reading the story of the Passion to the boys kneeling among Old Lady Arambula's lilacs. Or, as she hearkens to the call of the bell for Lenten devotions and she slips on her coat and hat and begins her measured way to church, she is back in the hall above Palmer's saloon playing the widow for the chapel that was to be, that night when Lone Pine staged the great Spanish drama, and Annie let down her hair.

The Padre listed some worthwhile desert books with a short critique on each:

April 18, 1937. It is Death Valley that has inspired most of the literature about Inyo in the past decade. I would not be unkind enough to suggest that the improved roads and hotel facilities, with the influx of tourists who furnish a market for genre writing, is the reason. But the fact remains. The first story of Death Valley was written by the man who gave it its name, William Lewis Manly. His *Death Valley in '49*, repetitious and confusing though it is, nevertheless the Bible of all historians of the deserts of California. It has been recently republished by Hebberd of Santa Barbara, and I suggest that no Californian who loves the story of his state or the deeds of noble men should omit to read Manly. Not so fortunate has been Spears' *Death Valley Sketches*, long out of print and now bringing fancy prices at second-hand stores. Out of print, too, is Coville's *Botany of the Death Valley Expedition*, 1891, the most complete survey of the flora of the valley extant.

For the popular, racier writings about the valley, I recommend Bourke ("Buck") Lee's *Death Valley* and *Death Valley Men* (Macmillan). Even the former deals more with the human fringe of this famous sink than it does with fossils and flora, but I can guarantee a few entertaining hours to those who appreciate a trip-hammer style, a rare flair for description, and the ability to dress up a good story with a top hat and cane. Lee is at his best in his delineations of the desert rat, at his lowest when he dabbles in geology.

Fighting Men of the West and *Death Valley Prospectors*, by Dane Coolidge, are rich in the human equation. The latter is the latest book on Inyo, and also supplies the newest version of the Lost Breyfogle mine legend. Both books are published by E.P. Dutton.

Honorable mention should be given to a score of other publications, *Touring Topics* and *Westways* for Phillip Johnston's articles; the Sierra Club reports for our mountain glories; the radio program of *Death Valley Days* for well-told tales based in the main on local history. Not to be forgotten, either, is Morrow Mayo's book, *Los Angeles*, with its trenchant chapter on Owen's Valley, nor Frank Norris's *McTeague*.

The Story of Inyo, by my friend, Will Chalfant, editor of the *Inyo Register* and son of a Death Valley pioneer, attempts to cover the entire region,

historically, geologically, and with ample descriptions of plant and animal life. Yet even this painstaking historian found it necessary to enlarge his Death Valley chapter into a separate volume, *Death Valley, the Facts* (Stanford University Press,) which is by all odds the most accurate, if least bizarre story of that happy hunting ground of fancy and fiction. In the latest edition, now in preparation, Chalfant will include the corrections on the route of the Manly and other parties necessitated by the discoveries made by Superintendent Goodwin of the National Monument in the past two years. Chalfant's books on Inyo will always remain the standard reference works on the area, for no other can ever again peruse old newspaper files, letters, and memoirs now destroyed or lost, nor put on paper the tales he has heard from long-gone pioneers, Indians, and prospectors.

Chalfant has done a like service for localities, which, while not in Inyo, were so closely connected with the story of this county by time and proximity as to deserve setting down by the same pen. This collection, *Outposts of Civilization* (Chalfant, Bishop), deals with the boom towns of Nevada, and Eastern California–Bodie, Aurora, and other ghost cities. Here, too, information is enshrined that can never again be unearthed elsewhere.

I seldom quote blurbs, but occasionally they take the words out of my mouth. So when Macmillan says of Neill C. Wilson's *Silver Stampede*, "Here is truth that beats fiction" and that herein "the adventures of innumerable sagebrushers, diehards, and rawhided old-timers of the Silver Seventies are told with full appreciation of the picturesque, the zestful, the humorous, and the violent," I can only breathe "Amen!" When I published a brief bibliography of Inyo recently, Neill Wilson's book was still in the hands of the printers. Today it takes its place in the first rank of all that has been written of Inyo, and lifts Panamint Valley onto the same plane as its sister valley of death and adventure as a source of colorful history of western America. Wilson is accurate, but not at the expense of vivacity; sparkling, but with no loss of conviction. This is a book of facts which you will not nod over, and one which must be read where sudden guffaws will not interrupt the service. For a Californian it is a "must" book. For those still residing elsewhere, it will be the last straw, and I advise its reading to them only when they are prepared to visit the land where such things can happen. After *Silver Stampede*, the few bizarre occurrences you may read in this corner will seem like a kiddie party in comparison with the Spanish rebellion.

He later added to his bibliography:

February 14, 1937. In the bibliography of Inyo and the desert given herein last week was not included the best summary of the flora and fauna of the arid hinterlands of the Golden State. I refer to Dr. Jaeger's *California Deserts*, which I heartily recommend to all seeking a thoroughly scientific and popu-

larly written explanation of the origin of the perplexing phenomena of the great inland basins, with invaluable sketches of the more common wild flowers to be met in the Mojave and Colorado deserts. Dr. Jaeger's work is the best handbook for the visitor, a veritable Baedeker of the badlands.

He discovered another book that might interest his readers, especially his friend, Wash Cahill:

May 22, 1938. I asked Wash Cahill if he knew one W.P. Bartlett, whose book, *Happenings* and *More Happenings*, I had picked up in a second-hand bookstore because I had seen Wash's name in them. Wash recalled him well, a companion of 40 years ago at Borate and Calico, when borax was mined in that neighborhood. I left the second volume with Wash, as he had never seen it, and in exchange received a piece of genre description that deserves recording. In Bartlett's first volume, he tells of one Jack Lefurgey, a teamster in the Daggett area who played a rather noble part in many of the incidents related. But he makes no mention of Sol Lefurgey, Jack's brother, also a muleskinner. And it is about Sol that I would speak. Sol drove a 12-mule team all day long, for days without end, over the mile stretch between the railroad siding at Daggett and the smelter, hauling coal for the processing of the ores. At one point on this journey his course lay smack between two saloons, one on each corner of the main thoroughfare. Before each establishment lounged the usual group of men off shift, Micawbers and illuminated signs. Apparently oblivious of them all Sol would pass dourly by on his monotonous way unless–ah unless! If some affluent soul, or one moved by the sight of so much exertion on a hot summer afternoon should but whisper "How about a drink, Sol?" Above the clumping of the mules and the groaning of the wagon, the sphinx high on the box would hear that invitation and throw on his brake as the animals responded to the jerk of the line. Down he would clamber and turn toward the source of the offer with a drawling, "Did I hear an angel singing?" Inside the dram dispensary he poured his drink in his own fashion, forming a fence around the top of his glass with his fingers as he filled the container a full half inch higher than would otherwise have been possible. "You ought to have side-boards on your glasses, Mac!" was a favorite aphorism. Sol furnished his own sideboards.

It was Sol who, asked if he had driven more than 12 mules in a team, nodded and agreed that he had. "Of course, up in Nevada in the old days I used to drive so many mules in a team that I had to stop people passing by and ask them how the lead mules were getting along."

In 1939 he announced a book recently published:

February 19, 1939. The WPA Guide to Death Valley, long promised, has appeared

on the gift shop counters down there. The foreword gives most of the credit for its compilation to Cora Vernon of the Federal Writers' Guild. We knew her hereabouts as the wife of Bourke Lee, whose *Death Valley* and *Death Valley Men* were probably the first works to picture the region in broader strokes than the conscientious historian dared use. The new work is a combination of both schools of writing; as factual as an automobile strip map, with mileages in decimals; yet it dawdles long enough at historic spots to tell a tale. The pictures, over half a hundred of them, are photographs by some of the country's best. This paper-bound volume will fill a need in local literature for those who have neither time nor funds to read the larger works and it puts down for future historians personal impressions of characters, some dead, some slowly slipping away, whom the world should remember. P.S. The glued-on paper cover is about as useful in a handbook to be bandied about Death Valley as dance pumps would be in Cottonwood Wash. Mine fell off in five minutes.

A reader asked the reviewer of books about his own literary ambitions:

February 7, 1937. "Have you written a book?" asks a reader. "If so, please tell me where I can secure a copy." "Now is the time to gather up some of the material you have been giving us and put it in permanent form," suggests another. Well, I have written several booksful about this sere and strange land, but I have never had the temerity to weave these yarns into a single rope. Nor is their danger of such in the predictable future. There are pipes to thaw, ground to break, walls to raise, and leaks to plug; walks must be shovelled and the cat must be fed. Over the range is an old Indian sentry post where arrowheads may be found, and I would see it. On a rock in a hidden valley are the names of Forty-niners, carved there in hours of despair. Them too must I glimpse, before the coreopsis flood fills Death Valley with gold, the desert tulip spurts scarlet from a thousand wounds, and the lurking larkspur frightens me off the road in Darwin Wash. A book? Some day, perhaps. But now I must be off to the glass mountain at Coso. Tomorrow? Well, tomorrow we should see the petroglyphs at Mountain Springs!

When he was asked if the "Sage and Tumbleweed" columns would ever be put into book form, he replied:

February 14, 1937. So for the nonce, dear readers, I have no desire to imprison these errant jottings between boards. For one, I feel that others have done the story of Inyo justice, and that the ephemeral nature of my poor observations is fitted best by the medium in which they appear. If they please, then reach for the scissors and paste-pot and edit your own book. *De gustibus*–each to his own taste, as the old lady said when she kissed the cow!

The Padre, however, did help the script writer, Ruth Cornwall Woodman, with ideas for the long-running radio show, *Death Valley Days*. Although she lived in New York, she came yearly for a few months to the Death Valley area to gather material for her scripts. Although this program began in 1930, it is not certain when the Padre first met her. He first mentioned meeting her in "Sage and Tumbleweed" in 1935:

> *May 30, 1937.* I asked Ruth Cornwall Woodman, the gifted author of the *Death Valley Days* broadcast for the Pacific Coast Borax Company, a few questions anent the returns from her programs. She acknowledged that outside of the national check-up performed for all broadcasts, giving their relative position in the popularity scale, it was difficult to discover the reactions of the audience. Save when one of the actors renders a line that offends the prejudices of a race or group, when replies are swift and unmistakable. Mrs.Woodman has always endeavored to avoid such controversies, but she cannot control the enunciation of the cast, and there is at least one historic instance of such a slip that could not be remedied.
>
> She wrote an account of "The Mesquite Club" at Shoshone, which differed only in name for identical organizations in a million hamlets where men sit and dream and whittle and exchange views on ships and sealing wax, cabbages and kings. But she had the Old Ranger say that this club was unique in that "it has no officers, no scheduled meetings, and no dues." But, alas, the actor pronounced "dues" without sufficient precision, and it went out on the airways sounding like "Jews." Hundreds of letters and wires poured in. "I had a box of your product in the house and poured it down the sink after I heard your insult." "I shall never again either listen to your program or buy your goods. (Signed) An Indignant Hebrew." Thus ran the comment, and the Borax Company and the advertising firm were helpless. To comment over the radio or to attempt an explanation, even if the former listeners were all to tune in again, would only arouse other groups who had not observed the faux pas at first. So they simply grinned and bore it. There have been other occasions when letters have come in accusing the producer of selling out to the Catholic Church, or to the Methodists, or to some other organization because of a passing mention of a service or a minister.
>
> It is the custom on this broadcast to announce the title of the program for the following week at the close of the broadcast. This led one man in a southern city to write the company that he objected to its use of the funeral oration, a classic in flamboyant oratory, which had been preached over his brother. In desperation, the officials asked Mrs. Woodman to phone him from New York. She discovered that he was a lawyer, and threatened suit if the company used the material. She explained that the sketch was already in rehearsal. He was obdurate. She then begged him to allow her to send him the script for his approval, and she would have the actors prepare an-

other broadcast for the next evening. To this he agreed, and when he returned the manuscript he had changed exactly one word. Mrs. Woodman confessed to me that she had not dreamed the deceased had a relative alive.

More pleasant was her experience with Frank Tilton. Frank, who is now a carpenter for the Borax company's railroad at Death Valley Junction, was one of the original 20-mule team drivers. In a sketch Mrs. Woodman related his experiences and mentioned the fact that he was still at Death Valley. One of the listeners was Frank's daughter, who had lost track of him and had given him up for dead. Result: Frank and his child were reunited and one of the most fascinating dramas of the air was Mrs. Woodman's subsequent description of the radio broadcast and its sequel.

I well recall the charming rendition of the story of Monsieur Marius Durand, the Frenchman who had invested all his profits from his old cafe and bar in the elaborate Mozart establishment at Goldfield just as prohibition became the law of the land. Loving his wine and seeing no harm in it, the high-principled old gentleman accepted the edict with rare fortitude, closed up shop, and sailed for France, sadly straitened in fortune. Came repeal, and Marius returned to Goldfield and reopened his business on as magnificent a scale as ever. But Goldfield was not the same. The mines had closed, the town was but a shadow, tourists were few. Things were desperate for Monsieur and Madame. Then came Mrs. Woodman's account over the radio. This spring she called again at Marius' place, and introduced herself. "Ah, Madame, you are my savior! You have save my life. Madame, three thousan' people have come here. They hear your story, they ask, 'Are you Monsieur Durand?' They say, 'We hear about you over radio.' They buy. Ah, Madame, let me order your dinner. Pheasant, Madame, and champagne. Chateau Yquem, non? Ah, Madame..."

Whether Mrs. Woodman drank her champagne then or not and, since Wash Cahill was her escort, I am sure the cork was pulled, I do know that she brought a bottle of the best of Marius' stock with her to Death Valley that day and placed it in storage with Kathryn Ronan, manager of Furnace Creek Inn. A few evenings later, Col. White, Ray Goodwin, Mrs. Woodman, Miss Ronan, and a few others sat down to dinner at the Inn and the authoress told of Durand. It seemed like the proper occasion for serving the champagne, so Miss Ronan ordered it served. To her chagrin the bus boy brought ordinary wine glasses. "Where are our champagne glasses?" "They are all in use, Miss Ronan." So Monsieur Durand's priceless sparkling wine was served without its proper setting, the only flaw in the tale. Yet when Mrs. Woodman writes the sequel to the story of the Mozart, I wonder if she will know what I have since discovered, that en route to the dining room the bus boy, who is a professional dancer, lost his balance and shattered every champagne glass in Death Valley into a thousand pieces. Somehow I think that would furnish a rare sound effect on the radio.

Later he told of another of her visits:

May 8, 1938. That woman was here again. Referring, of course, to the charming author of *Death Valley Days*, Mrs. Ruth Cornwall Woodman, who has just completed another of her annual rodeos of material for her radio scripts. In Independence she garnered much from Mrs. Eva Lee Gunn, whose memory of memorable days in Owens and Panamint Valleys in the past century is equaled by few. In Lone Pine, Cris Carrasco and Gus Marsh furnished her with many incidents relative to the building of the Whitney trail, the death by lightning of one of the party on the summit, and other highlights that her skillful pen can dramatize for the nation. Yes, the Padre did a little, too; but not much was needed, as Mrs. Woodman is a regular *Register* reader. She merely wanted to check with the pastor on some of the details of my stories, such as Lupe's wedding at Death Valley, the ride with the hophead, the day we built–but wait and find out for yourself.

Tuesday evening is a sacred time in Inyo, for then the call of the bugle announces the advent of another of the Old Ranger's Death Valley tales. I know of no other area in America which has been publicized over the air so long and so consistently as this, and if God spares her, Mrs. Woodman anticipates no difficulty in blazoning us to the four winds for many a day.

"Wash" (W.W.) Cahill, superintendent of the railroad that feeds Death Valley, is the official chauffeur and guide of Mrs. Woodman on these trips, as I have mentioned herein previously. He pretends not to enjoy the task, which leads to continual badinage, much of it too good to be lost to history. Frequently the quarrel centers about the authenticity of a date unearthed from old prospectors or others, and the author lady boards her train for New York with a final, " It was 1906, wasn't it?" and Wash's just as final shout: "1907!" But the woman sometimes wins, as on her latest visit, when they argued for days about the date of Jimmy Dayton's sad end in Death Valley. Frank Tilton, old-time mule-skinner and now railroad carpenter at the Junction, was one of the two men who found Jimmy's body beside those of his mules one day in August, 1899. Frank claims it was in 1898, and this date Wash and Will Chalfant, author of *Death Valley, the Facts*, accepted. Neither did the National Park Service question this figure and it forms part of the bronze tablet above Dayton's and Shorty Harris' mesquite-guarded graves. But from Washington Dr. Theodore Palmer sent a newspaper clipping of 1899 showing a Los Angeles telegraphic dispatch detailing Dayton's death. The dateline, he affixed, however, was not part of the clipping itself, it had been taken from the paper's heading. On this technicality the park authorities refused to admit an error in the generally accepted date, and Mrs. Woodman, who leaned to the 1899 version, was not able to convince Wash either.

The other man who helped to bury Jimmy Dayton was Dolph Nevares, owner of Nevares Spring in the valley, but whose home is in San Bernardino.

> Not three weeks ago, Dr. Palmer walked up to the spring with T.R. Goodwin, superintendent of the monument. And there was Dolph, irrigating. From the barrage of questions asked by the scientist came one that was destined to make history. "When did you first come to Death Valley, Dolph?" "When we buried Jimmy Dayton." "Jimmy Dayton? Ah, and what year was that?" "Well, I am afraid it wasn't in the year that I always said it was. I remember very well that I bought a new gold watch before starting on that trip, and I have kept it all these years. Last week I took it into the jeweler to get it cleaned, and he opened the case and showed me that I had bought it in 1899." I am sure the doctor's customary smile was a little wider after that, and Ray Goodwin had to admit that perhaps the Park Service had made a mistake. But no such evidence would change Wash Cahill, at least while Mrs. Woodman was around. But, unfortunately, on her Lone Pine sojourn, the Padre received from a National Park research worker in San Francisco a copy of a letter just sent to Dr. Palmer saying that in the Bancroft library he had discovered a Los Angeles paper of August, 1899, describing the tragedy of Jimmy Dayton. The Padre silently handed it to Mrs. Woodman, and she quietly tendered it to Wash. He took the blow like a man, if you are familiar with how a man takes a rebuff of that kind from a woman.

Again he referred to *Death Valley Days* to encourage his readers to be aware of the stories that hit so close to home:

> *August14, 1938.* Back in April 1935, this curio shop displayed "The Ship of the Desert" for the first time outside of the point of origin. Remember that fantastic poem of the phantom ship that plows Death Valley's sands? And the sweet epithets used by Pap Walker and W.T. Grant, who wrote it at Olancha in 1875, upon Jack Gunn and Ely and Reuben Spear, fellow miners who were supposed to have shared in their adventure. I heard the "Ship of the Desert" over the radio last night, on the *Death Valley Days* program. So, too, did Mrs. Eva Lee Gunn, widow of Jack, for that good woman never misses a turn of the dial on Friday evenings. She has the original manuscript of this clever piece of humbuggery in her possession even yet. On Friday, Aug. 12, this program promises the dramatization of the discovery of Mt. Whitney and the building of the trail to America's top. On that night also there will be many of us old-timers holding our breath, for Gus Marsh and Bert Johnson and Cris Carrasco are still here, and their names to us spell Whitney. So listen in to our broadcasting division.

A story which was strictly the Padre's was broadcast with the script following very closely the Padre's column:

January 1, 1939. "Those are orange trees, Pauline," explained the Padre, nodding his head toward the left as we spun through the rain. Pauline looked hard and earnestly through the back window, for she had never seen an orange tree. Nor had her little brother, Eddie, seen a train, or a street car. Their mother, sitting silent beside them, had never seen either orange trees or trains. After all, the iron horse had never crossed Death Valley, and Mary Boland Esteves could not have beheld one of these snorting, fiery snakes elsewhere, for Death Valley had been for her, like most other Shoshone Indians, the entire visible universe. Even if Eddie and Pauline had Steve Esteves, a Spanish Basque, for a father, they knew of the world outside only through him, the radio, or their classroom. So, when Fred Williams suggested that we leave them seated in the car in the heart of Yule-decked Monrovia while we transacted other business, he was rubbing Aladdin's lamp for three children on the threshold of fairyland.

Steve Esteves–well, Steve was also on the threshold of another world. Up to the day he took to his bed, later to be transferred to the sanitarium in Monrovia, he had been the head stonemason for the Pacific Coast Borax Company. As such, he had built many of the mottled rose and buff and ebony terraces and embankments that mount from the valley floor to Furnace Creek Inn, or gird the date orchard and the golf course at the ranch below. Not here, but in the years that he burrowed in the mines of Nevada, years before blowers and safety devices became compulsory, Steve's lungs had become filled with the deadly dust that spelled certain death from silicosis, miner's consumption. So it was that the Padre visited him in his bed by the apricot tree one afternoon, and from reminiscences of the desert they drifted to Spain, thence to Mexico in Steve's footsteps, then to the East and back to the West and finally, by the aid of God's grace and that sense of direction which even a Padre acquires in the trackless parishes, to the things of the soul. "When Steve found out that he had actually made his Confession after so long a time,"confided the pastor later, "tears ran down his cheeks. Hard-boiled? There is no such thing as a hard-boiled desert man. That tough exterior is only a desert varnish, such as even the very rocks acquire from exposure to sun and storm."

That visit had been two weeks ago, and it had been followed by Communion and Extreme Unction administered by the local clergy. Today's hegira from Death Valley was due to the Padre's desire that Steve should see his family ere he died, and to a detail that had not bothered Steve much previously, the lack of any formal matrimonial bond, civil or ecclesiastical, between himself and Mary Boland. This afternoon we had remedied all that, with Fred Williams and Inyokel as witnesses in as strange a wedding as I have ever known. The bride knew no English, the bridegroom but little of the Indian tongue. So their daughter, Pauline, who was the first child ever baptized in Death Valley, acted as the interpreter, asking her mother if she

would "take Steve Esteves in sickness and in health until death does you part," and translating for Father Johnson and the rest of us her mother's guttural assent... Two sentences will never die in my heart–Steve's injunctions as his dear ones said "goodbye." "Pauline, do what the Padre tells you and you will be always right," and "Padre, remember! Death Valley for me!"

Less than a week after we knelt in the hall at Furnace Creek Ranch for the first Catholic funeral in Death Valley. Dobe Gunnarson was there; Dobe, who had worked with Steve on many a wall. And Johnny Mills, who is the dean of the valley's first prospectors. And Hank Patterson, the husky Indian who had packed a thousand tons of cement and a mountain of rocks for the artist whose broken body lay before the improvised altar, set against the piano before the stage. The catafalque consisted of two backless benches; the candles beside the coffin were hardly liturgical, but they were miners' candles, and Steve would have liked that. The Padre answered a lot of questions by his little talk, explaining why Steve was enjoying the full honor of Catholic obsequies, because God had given him the privilege of a long illness in which to recall what he had left in his Father's house, and had given him the grace to return. A sentence or two linger in memory: "If you seek his monument, look around you... But these things he could not take with him... St. John relates the glories of heaven, and describes the walls as built of all manner of precious stones, sapphire, chalcedony, jasper, topaz, and amethyst. May I interject here one of Steve's expressions, one understandable in a man who has used like idioms in a reverent sense in his native tongue, and which lacked malice even in his broken English. 'By God,' said he one day, as I reveled in the beauty of a wall which he had fashioned so lovingly, fondling each stone as he winnowed it from a hundred others, 'By God, Fader, some day I build you fine altar.' He can no longer build us the altar, but can we not pray that he may soon enter the gates of pearl, soon glory in the splendor of the stone he understood so well, nay, that before long he may stand by the dazzling throne of His Creator, and remain forever close–by God?"

At his first visit to Steve at the hospital, the sick man recalled to the Padre an incident he had forgotten. Steve rehearsed, gasping for breath as he chuckled, the occasion on which he was doing a little stone work for the pastor at Lone Pine. In his characteristic fashion, the artisan had muttered often and not infrequently spoke out loud about the faults and ancestry of the stones he was setting in place. Particularly was this true when he caught his finger in a crevice, or dropped a boulder on his toes. He tried to restrain himself when he observed the priest about, but the alert Padre did not miss much. Came an afternoon when an interested lady visitor marveled at the diversity and beauty of the wall. "What lovely rocks! What is this? And look at this." Turning to the Padre, "Do you know the names of these?" "No," countered the pastor, "but this man here knows the names of all of them."

"Oh, isn't that wonderful! What are they?" "Well," the priest cut in before Steve could answer, "you can start in with a son of a so and so and work up!"

Finally an opportunity arose for the Padre to visit Ruth Cornwall Woodman in her own territory of Rye, New York. An elderly man, Mr. Borie, of Owens Valley invited the Padre to drive him and his wife to New York to visit the 1939 World's Fair. The Bishop gave his permission, especially since the Padre was Mr. Borie's guest and he was able to stay with his brother Frank in New York. At this time Frank was Dean of Education at Fordham University:

September 10, 1939. It was only fair, even if she were not charming company, to call on Ruth Cornwall Woodman, now that the Padre and I were in New York. The petite wife and mother who skims over Death Valley and its purlieus annually, gathering the wisps and threads she skillfully weaves into the storied nests from which the radio actors chirp to the world in *Death Valley Days*, never failed to climb our stairs when she came within Whitney's shadow. So up to Rye we went, seeking "Loudon Woods." We found it, a close of ten acres or so wherein a dozen houses perched on rocky knolls or hid beneath the umbrellas of great maples and stalwart elms. The Boston Post Road bent around the boundary wall, and the New Haven Railroad rattled and quivered in a yawning trench a hundred yards away, but in Ruth Woodman's backyard we could hear only the explanations her daughter, Winthrop, was giving us about her playhouse, or son Billy telling how his mother had supplied him with a retort courteous for the neighbor lad who had ticketed him "a shrimp." "Call him a big palooka!" was her prescription. This shows that the lady, and husband, Bill, for that matter, are many-sided folk, and that it is possible to paint a masterpiece of rugged men, clattering stagecoaches, and sage-strewn waste with no other models than a prattling child, a backyard barbecue, and a rambling rock garden.

Asked the Padre, "Would it be possible to get a few tickets for the *Death Valley Days* broadcast tomorrow night? I would like to have my brother and his children come along?" Mrs. Woodman assured him that she would have the tickets sent him that day from New York. They came in the morning's mail, but we had not been home an hour from Rye when our hostess' voice came over the phone, saying that Miss Barstow, program director for McCann-Erickson, Inc., a lady who was in Lone Pine for the Mt.Whitney-Death Valley Highway dedication, wanted to know if the Padre would mind going on the air himself for a five-minute interview about his parish and the proposed Death Valley Memorial Chapel. This was why I heard him telephone Archbishop Spellman's office for permission, and why next afternoon we sat with Jack MacBryde, "The Old Ranger," up at Radio Center and read over

the script Mrs.Woodman had hurriedly thrown together that morning. To the studio audience at night announcer George Hicks introduced the Padre as one who had been anonymously mentioned three weeks previously for a house-building incident of 17 years ago. It was a breath-taking introduction to the big city, this catapulting into a national broadcast the day after your arrival. And perhaps the Padre didn't hear about that second show–there were two broadcasts at 9:30 and 12:30, E.D.S.T., for the East and West, respectively–for the folks at home. "Here we see you off to New York," wrote one woman, "and we sit back and breathe easier. Then, doggone it, we turn on the radio and you're here talking to us again. How come?"

As I sat in the front row of studio 8A in Radio City that night and watched the Padre and others walk up to the mike, read, recede, and sit down to whisper to some of the cast who were not scheduled at the moment; as I saw the sound effects man slam an auto door fastened to a frame, drop pieces of tin on a counter for coins, clink a spoon against a tea cup for another actor who was supposed to be breakfasting–and he 20 feet away; as I looked over the heads of the visitors from Keokuk and Walla-Walla to the control booth where Miss Steinfeld was regulating the mob scenes, the asides, and the entrances by a wave of her hand, seen through the sound-proof glass behind which she and the engineer were listening; as I searched the stage in a desperate effort to find some little suggestion of the lonely land this program was depicting and discovered nothing but a silhouette of the 20 Mule Team roughly jig-sawed out of plyboard and set before the footlights; finally, as I beheld the famed bugle call of the borax wagoneers played in the wings by a young chap, who in order to suggest the dying echoes, merely turned his back to the microphone for the second bar; as all these cold facts bore in upon my consciousness, I felt like one being shaken out of a beautiful dream by a relentless companion or an equally heartless alarm clock. I recalled the night I found out there was no Santa Claus. I understood then how Ruth Woodman could spin Death Valley yarns in a Rye garden, for there she need but shut her eyes to see. If I had closed my eyes at Radio City, I would have been back in the desert, for there is no denying the craftsmanship of man and machine that go to make up the illusion. But to my old cronies in the "Land of Little Rain" I say: "Keep away from the broadcast and hold on to your dreams." Better be as Wordsworth, beholding the "host of golden daffodils,"who

Gazed, but little thought
What wealth the show to me had brought;
For oft, when on my couch I lie
In vacant or in pensive mood,
The flash upon that inward eye
Which is the bliss of solitude;
And then my heart with pleasure fills,
And dances with the daffodils.

Hear *Death Valley Days* from your couch.

Sit thee there, and send abroad
Fancy, high-commission'd-send her!
–She will mix these pleasures up
Like three fit wines in a cup,
And thou shalt quaff it–thou shalt hear.

Keats seems to have anticipated the sound-effects man.

The Woodman's son, Billy, has the heart of a poet, and the stories he heard about the Catholic Church and her liturgy from his playmates, Bobby and Dicky Cocola, cause him to complain to his parents about what he thinks are the bare bones of Presbyterianism. "Why can't I go to church where the minister doesn't dress in a raincoat, like ours?" was one query still remembered. Another was a demand as to why the Woodman family did not attend Mass upon a recent Catholic holyday, the Assumption of Our Lady, undoubtedly. "Why, what day is this?" asked his mother. "The Feast of the Operation," was all the information she could glean until the Padre cleared things up at his call.

In November of the same year she returned to glean more material for *Death Valley Days*:

> *November 19, 1939.* Ruth Cornwall Woodman, the radio writer lady, passed this way last week in her search for material for *Death Valley Days*. The Padre took her and Wash Cahill, who always lays aside his arduous duties as Superintendent of the Tonopah and Tidewater to escort Ruth to where she may "point a moral, adorn a tale," over to the CCC camp to show the boys what a real script writer looks like. It happened to be Friday night, and the Padre suggested to the lads that they could tune in within a few minutes and hear an Old Ranger program written by this little woman. Mrs. Woodman returned to the Inn before the broadcast, and next morning we learned that the story had included a recitation of the verse, "Mornin' on the Desert," found written on the door of an abandoned shack in Rhyolite, Nev., several years ago, and once reproduced in this column. The CCC enrollees were so thrilled with the combination of script and writer that many of them rose early the following day to watch the sun creep down the Panamints as they had heard it described in the radio tale. "Gosh! we never noticed that before. It was just the way she said. The tops of the range became rose and gold and the light slid down the slopes, carrying the blue along with it. Gee!" I'll wager that many a letter outbound from Death Valley that week contained a homely description of sunrise on the Panamints, as seen from Camp Funeral range.
>
> Not all Mrs. Woodman's jaunts to the Death Valley National Monument have had such happy endings. There was that journey to the old town of

Panamint, high up in Surprise Canyon, over a year ago. Horses were drawn from Furnace Creek Ranch in a trailer, and Brownie, the husky deputy sheriff from Junction, went along as hostler. Nothing untoward occurred on the up trip, and the return seven-mile jog to the car was uneventful. But the horses, who had been loaded from a level platform at the ranch, now balked at climbing up into the trailer. Brownie pushed and struggled and coaxed, but the wastes of Panamint Valley looked much better to the brutes than the confines of their gig. Ruth Woodman speaks with reverence of the calm, persuasive tone in which Brownie repeated, "Come on, hossie, nice hossie," for hours on end. It was 8 o'clock at night when Brownie began his argument, and it was 1:30 in the morning when the beasts, perhaps out of sheer ennui, climbed into the wagon for the 50-mile trip home. There is one tale that will never be heard over *Death Valley Days*.

Frank Tilton, veteran of the *Twenty Mule Team*, rode down to the Inn with Mrs. Woodman and Wash Cahill on the writer's visit. He was upset because he had had all his teeth extracted and two plates inserted, with poor results. The replacements were too loose for use, and he could not understand it, for he had gone to "a good dentist–he had big ads in all the papers." As he was about to enter the dining-room for dinner with Wash and Kathryn Ronan and the visitor, Wash suggested to Johnny Mills, who had already eaten, that he lend his set of teeth to his old pal for the occasion. Satisfactory terms could not be arranged, however, and Frank had to sit with a free high-class dinner in sight and eat soft-boiled eggs. "What a pal!" was Wash's reproach to the chuckling Johnny.

Inyokel mentioned above the poem "Mornin' on the Desert." Its story follows:

May 22, 1938. Heavens knows I am not given to clipping verse and retailing it to the patient readers of this *omnium gatherum*. But a word last week from one of those women who find time to make scrapbooks, and who is making one of S. and T., and whose husband tries to be a jump ahead of her scissors lest she ruin some really important news in the *Register*, caused me to rummage about for rhyme for her mosaic. Even if Inyokel is no bard he has seen other eyes "in a fine frenzy rolling," and he concedes that there are otherwise some folk who love a bit of lilt. So what harm if I borrow a stanza or two for the lady, and others so minded and set them down to break the prosaic monotony? Like the spirit in a plum pudding, a verse will lighten the burden, perhaps even set it aflame.

"Mornin' on the Desert" was found written on the door of a shack on the Southern Nevada desert over a score of years ago. The author is unknown, and I copy it from a version found on postcards and souvenirs hawked at

wayside in hereabout.

Mornin' on the desert, an' the wind is blowin' free
An' it's ours, jest for the breathin', so let's fill up, you an' me;
No more stuffy cities, where you have to pay to breathe,
Where the helpless human creatures mave an' throng an' strive an' seethe.

Mornin' on the desert, an' the air is like a wine,
An' it seems like all creation has been made for me and mine
No house to stop my vision, a neighbor's miles away,
An' the little 'dobe shanty that 'longs to me an' May.

Lonesome? Well, I guess not! I've been lonesome in a town,
But I sure do love the desert with its stretches wide and brown.
All day through the sagebrush here the wind is blowing free,
An' it's ours just for the breathin' so let's fill up, you an' me.

With the footnote that in Inyokel's case, the last word in the second stanza refers to the month and not a lady, the prospector-poet has assayed my sentiments accurately. Our desert dwellers prefer the dank and poisonous air of abandoned drifts and shafts to the eye-searing miasma of the Second Street tunnel in Los Angeles or the aroma of burning brakes on California Street in the city by the Golden Gate. And the smell of sage after a rain! Why do not some of the perfume manufacturers bottle that, and give it one of those alluring names they bandy about these days? For instance, "*Odeur des Grands Ouverts*" (Smell of the Wide Open), or "*Quarante et Huit* (Will Draw Eight Horses or Forty Men).

In his column of March 17, 1940, the Padre alerted his readers to the *Death Valley Days* special broadcast on Good Friday evening, March 22. However, he was unable to hear it as he had gone to his Maker the day after he wrote the following:

March 17, 1940. Ruth Woodman sent the Padre an air mail letter from New York. She told him that she had just completed the script on the story of Steve Esteves, originally outlined in this column, to be broadcast over *Death Valley Days* by NBC on Good Friday evening at 8:30, P.S.T. Since the tale will carry a reference to Steve's dream of building the altar for All Souls chapel in Death Valley, and the plan for a national Way of the Cross, she thinks the time appropriate. Tell your friends.

The Padre gained a receptive audience from these broadcasts, but not exactly what he had in mind as he noted here:

November 12, 1939. "How're you doin'?" I ventured, nodding towards the envelope addressed to the Padre in care of the National Broadcasting Company. "What do you mean?" he parried, the corners of his mouth drooping another notch as he read. "Oh, you know the Death Valley Memorial Chapel. That dream of yours that you mentioned over the radio on the *Death Valley Days* program, to be built by all those who wished to buy a stone in memory of their dead. Are you getting any returns?" He looked up. "Returns? Oh, sure. One dollar to date directly traceable to the broadcast and a few gems like this. Listen."

"A few moments ago my husband and I listened as we do every Friday, to the Old Ranger and heard you come in on the program... We live 40 miles from C_____, and are both retired, with just enough money left to bury us. We have a little pension from our former employers, about enough for our simple needs. We love flowers, and would like to live in California. Is there any suitable place for us in your parish? My relatives came to this state while the Indians were still here. My husband's people are from Cork, mine from Clare. Would you answer this unusual request?"

The Padre hardly looked up as he reached for a formidable envelope weighted down with air mail stamps and a special delivery, scabrous with gold sealing wax. "From the nobility," he whispered. Then he read: "From many friends I heard of you speaking on air from New York, and of your too wonderful project of building beautiful chapel in the Death Valley... I am refugee from_____, where my family have been counts and countesses since the tenth century... I bring to America many family heirlooms, some from 14th century. I have precious manuscripts, Egyptian vases. Some books are worth $50,000, but to you, dear Father, I shall be glad to sell anything at half price. Please to answer, dear Father as possible in which items you would be interested for the benefit of your wonderful church and all your needy people and pilgrims..."

"I must refer this one to Scotty," was the comment on the next letter out of the drawer. "I heard you on the radio and when you mentioned Death Valley I wondered if you knew the gold prospector, Scotty, out there... Fifty-one years ago my husband's brother, Jim Scott, left for the gold fields, and was never heard of again... His sister is now very ill of heart trouble aggravated by the sudden death of her husband last month...Would you try to find out if this Scotty is the same Jim Scott?"

"Here's your chance, Inyokel," the pastor resumed, slipping me a folder outlining the conditions for fellowships in the Guggenheim Foundation. He had fished it out of an envelope from a California city. The writer had written the foundation first and had drawn a refusal, so now he was trying the Padre of Death Valley. "Have been trying to find you ever since I heard your broadcast...I am writing to see if you know of someone in your parish who would let me give them a test to prove that mineral can be located the way

that I say it can. You have heard that water can be located by what they call 'water witching' with a peach tree forked stick; well it can be for a certainty, and I use a thoroughly seasoned fork somewhat similar in the same fashion, yet a little different, in order to locate the strongest ore body in any given region. Then I use a geophysical instrument to put me on the strongest part of the ore vein. I have been laughed at so much that if you are skeptical too I won't mind. You know, Father, I wouldn't joke myself that much; cracking the ice on anything new is the hardest; the missionary work is the hardest in anything. I wish you would consent to be my partner in this and then we could split some way financially between ourselves. I would surely like to do my bit towards the shrine you are building in Death Valley..."

"I am a prisoner in the state penitentiary here," says this boy in the Middle West, "and I heard you over the radio. I have been a bad boy, but I see my mistakes now. Would you try to get me a job in your parish, and I can be paroled?"

"You asked if I had any returns, Inyokel. How are those? The moral is, I suppose, a paraphrase of the old poem about the arrow:

When you shoot a broadcast into the air
It falls to earth only God knows where!

And, Inyokel, keep your eye out for that woman who's going to haunt All Souls' chapel."

13

INYO BOOSTER

Reference has previously been made to Father Crowley's public and civic involvement in events such as the Lone Pine Jubilee celebration and parish and community entertainments. He was not long in Lone Pine before his awareness of the many problems of Owens Valley pressed him to take a more active role in finding solutions. During his first tour of duty in Owens Valley he had not been as involved. When he was transferred to Fresno in 1924 he still had kept up his interest in concerns of the Valley. When the Watterson brothers, who owned the four banks in the valley towns, were sent to jail for mishandling funds as a result of overlending to valley residents hard hit by the loss of their water to Los Angeles, the Padre did not sit by idly. To quote William Kahrl's *Water and Power:* "And when the Watterson brothers went to jail, he joined with other prominent current and former residents of the Owens Valley in appealing for clemency on their behalf. 'In all my experience with the Wattersons,' he wrote to the chairman of the state crime commission, 'I never knew them to seek for personal gain at the cost of the inhabitants of the Valley who trusted them... On the contrary, they lived modestly, even frugally, and fought consistently for the people against the encroachments of the Los Angeles Water Board... It has never been proved that the money was used otherwise than for the protection of the farmers in the Owens Valley and for the extension of the life of the industries which kept the Valley alive.'

"And though he did not condone the brothers' actions, he observed, 'I can readily understand how the Wattersons could yield to the temptation of "borrowing" money from their banks to keep the Valley alive while the City of Los Angeles browbeat and dragged through every court in the land, the poor and practically defenseless ranchers.'"[72]

In addition to the fact that these were the years of the Great Depression, other problems were specific to Owens Valley. During the building of the Los Angeles Aqueduct there were employment opportunities, but these diminished when it was completed in 1913. Economic

hardship was created by the loss of the usual water supply when the City of Los Angeles finished the aqueduct and bought up huge tracts of land around 1923-1924. This left the residents with little hope of income from agricultural or ranching pursuits. In addition many had lost all their life savings when the local Watterson banks had to declare bankruptcy and were closed in 1927. There was no place to get credit or loans. Many ranchers left the valley and their farms and homes to obtain work elsewhere. Those who sold their ranches and farms to the City in desperation, were looked upon as traitors by those who held on to their land. A feeling of distrust and bitterness and even despair was prevalent among the citizens and there seemed to be few solutions. Toward the City of Los Angeles years of hatred and resentment sometimes erupted into violent behavior such as the dynamiting of the aqueduct in 1927. In dry years the City also pumped underground wells which further decreased the local supply of water.

Soon after coming to the Owens Valley Father Crowley became a member of the Lone Pine Lions Club, an organization clearly dedicated to improving the economic lot of the area and its residents. His involvement snowballed into helping to found various organizations or coalitions both in Inyo County and later in Mono County, to the north.

His sharp analytic mind and his excellent public speaking and writing talents enabled him to be an expert spokesman for many civic groups. His congeniality and gift of diplomacy disarmed many of his opponents and his selflessness reassured those who feared "special interests."

The *Inyo Independent*, published by George Savage had several articles regarding these civic activities and the politics involved. Will Chalfant, Bishop editor of the *Inyo Register*, also followed these activities, though often with a different slant than the *Inyo Independent*. Both became friends and colleagues of Father Crowley during their association with him in the various civic organizations.

Shortly after his arrival in Owens Valley, the *Inyo Independent* printed a letter to the editor from Father Crowley dated April 23, 1935:

"Lone Pine, California
April 23, 1935

"Dear Sir:

"I regret with you, that Inyo County will have no adequate representation at the coming San Diego World's Fair. A friend who was privileged to get a preview of the Exposition a few weeks ago assured me that it was of surprising beauty, perhaps the most beautiful fair ever staged. Further, from advance indications it would appear that there is

serious hope of its continuance into 1936. Yet the millions who will mill around the exhibits will see there nothing to direct them to the top and bottom of their country, seven hours drive away. And of the hundreds of thousands of dollars that will be spent by these sightseers, our merchants, packers, resort-owners and service station operators will see only the pennies to be left by those who stray off the advertised path and discover us.

"Is it too late to prepare a fitting exhibit of Inyo's marvels, raising the funds by popular subscription? The sum would be returned a thousand times over. And by an exhibit I do not mean simple pamphlets. The fair visitors, and those who visit the fair, will be laden down and brimming over with brochures on defrosters for baby's bottle, Glummick's Sulphur Springs for Leaky Valves and How to be Happy though not on the Dole. Pictures would be good, a diorama much better. Best of all, to your humble servant's way of thinking, and an advertising medium that would be a permanent asset to the County Museum, and always available for future publicity, would be a relief model of our county, showing our mountains, lakes and streams, our highways and their southern and northern connections, and above all, Mount Whitney, and below all, Death Valley. Such a map in the Ferry building in San Francisco never wants for a crowd of onlookers. In the museum at Yosemite such models of that famed valley are lost in a sea of humanity in the tourist season. If Mono County and the Bureau of Water and Power wished to cooperate, and I am reliably informed that these two have locked arms on the publicity for that county this year, there certainly could be little valid objection, for then we could add the lure of California's finest groups of readily accessible lakes, and the Los Angeles water and power system from snowline to the uttermost dam.

"Forgive me for speaking out like this, but I am one of those who saw Inyo 16 years ago and realized then that her only inalienable asset was her scenery, and on that she must capitalize, not at the expense of her mines and her cattle, but in conjunction with them, keeping ever in mind that the more visitors to our wonderland the more support for all our enterprises, the greater the general welfare. My return after a decade of absence reveals the largest crop to be our tourist harvest, and I am convinced that 'we ain't see nothin' yet.' Let us then, somehow, for the good of all of us, solve this Fair publicity problem. Mayhap this plea will arouse others, more fitted by talent and station for the task, to give Inyo, which in Indian means 'the abiding place of a great Spirit,' its place in 'The Harbor of the Sun.' Sincerely John J. Crowley"[73]

In spite of the Padre's letter, the County Supervisors chose not to provide any funding for the San Diego Fair.

Inyokel knew that one of the attractions that enticed the city-weary tourists and sportsmen to the Owens Valley was its superb fishing. Their visits would give an added boost to the local economy, a cause which always warranted a mention or two in Sage and Tumbleweed:

April 26, 1936. In the essay that gives the title to that handful of charming essays, *Fish on Friday*, Father Leonard Feeney, S.J., begins by explaining that Catholics do not have to eat fish on Friday, wanders off into a disquisition on the paradoxes of the faith, which he contends are in large part responsible for Catholic humor, and concludes: "But where am I who, a few pages back, started to write on fish? I am where every Catholic finds himself who undertakes to write on anything. I am writing on everything. For if one is a Catholic one cannot think without being cosmical or without being comical either, because the faith links all realities together and fills the world with surprises." With this borrowed apologia, I make bold to write on "fish."

Fish will replace the weather as our local leadoff for conversational purposes after May 1. May day is celebrated with floral fetes in many corners of the earth; in some the maypole is the center of the festivities; the Communists look upon it as an occasion for showing a bit of red in their buttonholes and frequently for blowing holes in their opponents. But in Inyo, we hie forth early in the morning with a fishing pole, and the queen of the May is Dolly Varden, Eastern Brook, or just Rainbow Trout, according to your luck. We display the red badge of our license and practice genuine Communism, for the millionaire with his $100 rod runs the same risk of an empty creel and must stop filling it at the same count as the barefoot gamin with his 49-cent store outfit.

The axiom that when the fisherman returns "the truth is not in him" is well known and respected here. Only visitors are listened to when they separate their hands to portray the one that got away. The natives neither know nor tolerate excuses. Guides and folders direct you to the best fishing grounds. The clerk in the hardware store or the lad who sells you worms at 50 cents a 100 will warn you not to fish above the falls or below the sawmill and will tell you that they have been bringing in some nice ones on Dusty Miller's from the pool behind the log jam. If you meet them afterwards and tell them that you had nary a strike, they will smile and console you with: "It's just one of those days," or "The moon is full an' they're feeding at night."

But if you are not easily put off, ask one of them: "Where do you go when you really want a mess of fish?" And then, if you belong to the same fraternity, wear the same button in your lapel, are related to the informant by blood or the same mother-in-law, and he is trying to sell you a car or a two-week pack trip to the innermost Sierra, he will slip out of town with you at

dawn. He will hide his car in the tallest thicket and again, in bated breath, ask you for your credentials. Satisfied at last, he will lead you to a thorn-fringed eddy or a glistening rapid and whisper: "There!" He will watch you for a few casts and then fade from sight, to return in a half-hour with a string of dripping trout.

"Thought I'd try my hand up the line while I was waitin'. What, no luck?" The conviction grows upon you that he has not told you all, that he has kept something in reserve–bait, time of day, a certain rock. After all, there are degrees in Waltonry, too. There must be arcana in every craft, and not even a senate committee can compel a man to tell a tyro what he has learned through sun and suffering. No, not even his wife. Thus it comes that the fine art of mental reservation reaches new heights, or depths, in the land of the fish and the line.

Just over Whitney, in Golden Trout Creek, White men first found the *Salmo aguabonita* or golden trout. It was and is probably the highest fish above sea level in the United States. Its deep-burnished golden belly, especially when the fish is first taken from the stream, and its salmon-colored flesh make it unique among trout, and favored is he who sits down to a sizzling batch of these finny Midases. Down in the very dregs of Death Valley, where a salt creek emerges from the sands, runs a few hundred yards, and disappears in the sands again, millions of minnow are swimming at this moment, perfect little two-inch fish, *Cyprinodos macularius*. I say "at this moment," for you may go there late in the year, as in the fall, and find no single denizen of those pools, nor any sign that they have ever been there, save the hollow dug by the paws of coyotes that came to scoop up a meal of this dainty fare. Where they go is a mystery to me, and I have found no one yet who knows. The two most popular books on Death Valley, *Death Valley, the Facts*, by Chalfant, and *Death Valley* by Lee, make no mention of them amongst the fauna of the region. Jaeger, in his *California Deserts*, describes them, and repeats the accepted theory that they are survivors of fish, perhaps of much greater size, of Pleistocene times, when the Death Valley lake and others were all connected intermittently by streams. So it would appear that our Inyo fish could tell us much of the world's making, if they were wont to spin a tale. We know that the golden trout would be on the up and up, but the Death Valley minnows could undoubtedly give us the lowdown.

There is food for meditation in the freak tank at the fish hatchery up at Independence. In that enclosure, the attendants place all abnormal, perhaps subnormal, fry. At present, there are a couple of bicephalous minnows in the trough, each with two fully developed heads and gills but joined in body at about half their length, terminating in one tail. Collaborators, as it were. What an opportunity for the wags if they were permitted to name them? In fact, I shall be glad to submit any suggestions sent me to the fish and game commission. Amos and Andy, George and Gracie, double-header,

Church and State, two fish with backbone enough for one–send in your ideas.

To return to *Fish on Friday* and the Catholic theme–in the tank, prone at the bottom because he cannot make much headway, is a trout without any tail. His body seems to have been cut off at the middle, as if in a cigar-cutter. It struck me that he would provide a good symbol for calendar-makers for Holy Saturday, when the fast and abstinence end at noon. Just half a fish. Why not? There are such things.

And in a commentary on those that pursue fishing for mental health reasons he had some thoughts:

May 24, 1936. From the same free library, I gather that a famous New York lapidary, about to undertake the cutting of the world's largest diamond, quieted his nerves for the ordeal by "three days of trout fishing." What a man! I suspect he has a friend who owns a rearing pond, by which he could sit in ease and pull in the trusting trout. But if he had lost a half dozen leaders each day, snagged his hook in his sweater between the shoulder-blades, tried to pull in the first real fish of the triduum and found that he had lost the handle of his reel–I wonder. Sore in body and soul from sleeping over concealed rocks and battling to confine the mosquitoes to feeding above the collar-line; disgusted from feeling around in the grass after dusk for the trout that you know you laid there, and you five miles from camp with a blister on your heel; I wonder what shape his nerves would be in for diamond-cutting after three days of this! Yet there must be something in it, for the summer's roster in the High Sierra includes surgeons and seamstresses, linemen and watchmakers. Have been feeling a little keyed up myself of late. Perhaps that big fellow is still lurking by the willow up at Oak Creek!

And in true "fish story" style he repeated a local legend:

June 21, 1936. Frogs are good fishing bait, and one of our visiting anglers looked long for a few recently. Finally, he came upon a gopher snake in the act of swallowing a lively one. But his attempts at making the snake disgorge were fruitless until he poured a few drops of whiskey down the reptile's throat. He then proceeded along the stream bank with his fishing, but was interrupted a half hour later by some object bruising against his boot. It was the snake with another frog in its mouth.

He answered a reader's inquiry on the Owens River:

May 8, 1938. Came home today, April 30, to find a framed photo on my table and a note from a district attorney's wife in a county not far away. The gift, a striking picture of the meandering Owens River in Long Valley, recalls a query sent me by the legal light himself in December, 1936, asking why there were so many S's in the river at that point. In this column I gave what I believed to be the correct answer, "path of least resistance, etc.," but upon gazing at the likeness another more cabalistic reason dawns upon me. God gave the Owens River in Long Valley a course a hundred times longer than man would have done in order that there might be more room for fish, and, conversely, for fishermen. If the D.A. is dropping his fly up there tomorrow morning, as I suspect he will be, let him thank his Creator that he has whereon to stand. For, judging from the cars rolling by on their way to the fishing grounds, a stream-lined river would force the anglers to stand six deep, like a crowd at a parade. But the extra bends will give them ample room, or, as the proverb puts it, "The turn about gives you a fair play."

He provided us with some stories of the local fishermen and women and even one about himself:

July 4, 1937. "Now is the time for all good men to come to the edge of a stream." If this is not the exact wording of the old typewriter lesson, it is the local version. In Inyo, even if we cannot all respond, we all feel the urge to fish. This is as it should be, for fishing is an ancient and honorable occupation, with no less a patron than St. Peter and a long line of less worthy, if more specialized, successors. There are few streams in the country devoid of finny citizens, and in almost all our lakes one can discern old codgers eyeing one speculatively, for all the world like sitters on the post office steps. They will also be there when you return next year.

Small wonder then that among those who twitch on Sunday mornings, when the Padre decides to ignore the thermometer and preach anyway, there are men and, tell it not in Gath, women whose thoughts course to a shimmering stretch of open water or who lean over the pew's edge and gaze in fancy into the dark pool that must await their bait yet another quarter of an hour. Because he loves the sport himself, I imagine that the Padre chuckles inwardly as he turns around after the Gospel and reads our thoughts. Darn the man, has he no heart?

Not that I would put John Byrne in the category above, but I know that he loves the sing of the reel. And he seldom returns empty-handed. He added a little to local fishing lore last week when he scalded his leg while angling in Hot Creek. Many small geysers of boiling water rise on the edge of, and actually in, this stream, which is the home of some real trout. In his zeal, John looked not where he stepped until the sensation of heat in one shoe, while the other was icy cold, brought him to his senses. It is unusual to get into hot water while fishing in season, but John managed it.

And John's wife says she will take her time about speaking to the pastor. It seems that her cousin, Margaret Hayes, was married before the Padre a year ago. When her anniversary drew near, she now living in Fresno and the Padre having to go there to fetch the sisters for vacation school, Agnes thought it would be a grand idea for the Padre to take over a batch of trout to Margaret, but feared it would be too much trouble for the good man. But oh no, he insisted it would be a real pleasure, and he would call the next day for the fish if Agnes would catch them. So forth into the fishing grounds in the gloaming tripped Agnes. After her winged a million mosquitoes, for that is about the quota per person in this year of water in Inyo, and she caught 25 fish or thereabouts, and other bites without number, also thereabouts. And she wrote to Margaret to tell her of the treat in store when the priest would arrive. And next day the Padre set out for Fresno and returned with the nuns and never gave ary a thought to the fish or his promise until he was back again in Bishop. And was he Byrned up!

Then there are the Richards, Bob and Bob, little Bob being bigger and old Bob smaller. They are masters of the art of dropping a fly on remote ripples so naturally that the most sophisticated Rainbow takes it as hors d'oeuvres from heaven. So with the icebox at the Kittie Lee Inn so handy the Richards are seldom out of fish; if they are, John Rasin, who eats heads and all, reminds Bob senior that he has forgotten "poor ole John." I defy anyone who does not know him to identify Bob in his tatterdemalion fishing garb as an attorney of parts. He looks more like one of the "Wanted" photos in the post office. But he surely can fool the fish.

Bob was the purveyor of a splendid Loch Leven, caught in the Walker River, to Father George Golden Fox, S.J. on his visit to Inyo two years ago. Since the Jesuit had indeed tried his luck while here, it was not altogether false for him to write his sister in San Francisco that he had been fishing and was sending her a fish. Casuistry, perhaps, but then, fish stories are privileged. And even Bob had received the nine-pounder from another. Look not a gift fish in the teeth.

If you pass by Carl Nellen's service station you will see photographs affixed to the window pane showing a foot or so of water in Bishop in February. Carl stands in a boat and fishes. In the next picture he has hooked a big one and is maneuvering him over to the bow. In the last snap he is just taking him off the hook. A fine romance, for the fish was a dead mackerel purchased for publicity. But how were the highway cleaners to know that a week later when they located the corpse after the water had subsided? In all probability you will find that record in file F16398Dw of the Department of Public Works. Thus, do fish stories begin. They will never end.

The Padre was always a booster for the local economy The Fish Hatchery north of Independence had great potential and was a source of won-

derment to the ever curious Padre:

> *July 2, 1939.* Only once do the oaks that are to be found in a few of our Eastern Sierra canyons come down to the highway. That is at Fort Independence, the grove north of our county seat, where Union soldiers were garrisoned in the War of the Rebellion. Follow this creek, Oak Creek, to the hills, and you soon come to the terraced lawns and teeming pools of the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery. Of a warm summer afternoon, and these are not far to seek, the entrance into the long hall of this massive pile is like a journey under Niagara Falls. The water roars from half a hundred nozzles into the long troughs where little fish miraculously headed in the same upstream direction await the change in signals. Or perhaps it is the shadow that lures them to that end of the runway. Or the ground liver. Some of them have their egg portion still clinging to their middle, as if they had been surprised at breakfast, or like firemen pulling off their red nightshirts on the way to a fire. Yet others have not yet left their cradles, and you may be fortunate enough to see a fish and game expert sorting out the whole batch of three or four millions, lifting out the infertile eggs with a pipette, one at a time. (I must pass this one on to the Padre as a good example of eternity, counting fish eggs.)
>
> The pools on the grounds are literally alive with trout. These big fellows, ranging from six inches to a yard, do not dash off like the fry inside when you approach. Rather have they learned that a shadow may mean a meal, so they follow you around the pond like dogs after a butcher's wagon. Try a few bread crumbs on these gentlemen, some salmon eggs, and watch the pile-up. It is worse than a Santa Clara-St.Mary's one-yard stand. After seeing this exhibit, particularly if you have had bad luck in your fishing this season, you will go home and break your rod into small pieces for kindling.

May Day, or Rainbow Days in the Owens Valley always kicked off the fishing season. In 1938 May 1st fell on a Sunday. Were the Catholics of the area to be left behind attending Mass in the early morning hours–the best for good fishing? Not if the Padre could do something about it. Well in advance, he announced that there would be a 3:30 a.m. Mass so that the Catholics could be out with rods and reels to compete with other Inyoites. He also told his parishioners he would bless their rods, reels and creels and they could come dressed in their fishing togs. He did not forget to invite a professional photographer to record the event which he knew would attract nation-wide attention. And so it did. *Westways* magazine published a story, complete with photos. Every positive news item was a plus for his beloved Inyo, he thought. To this day, the opening of the fishing season is a great event, although now it is

usually the last Saturday in April, eliminating the need for special early Sunday services.

Another of his concerns was the need for recreational opportunities for the children and youth of Lone Pine. He met with a citizen's group in May 1935 to discuss plans for improvement of the local park. Father Crowley made the motion for a resolution to estimate the costs and seek financial resources from government programs, and was appointed Chairman of the Commission. He appeared before the Inyo County Board of Supervisors, along with other members, to make his plea for a recreational center in Lone Pine.

These county supervisors were to become familiar over a period of years with the persistent Padre who was always ready to go to bat for his town and county. They were unfamiliar with Catholic priests, and may have had misgivings in dealing with one, but this one's charm, energy and dedication caused them to listen attentively. The Padre's colleagues were aware of his power and often appointed him to be the spokesperson to represent their views and causes at official meetings.

Mount Whitney was one of the unsung tourist attractions of Owens Valley. In 1904 a primitive trail had been constructed and in 1909 scientists from the Smithsonian Institute had repaired the trail and constructed a primitive rock cabin on the summit. It was outside this summit cabin that the Padre said the first Mass in 1934. When the CCC was instituted in 1933, the U.S. Forest Service saw an opportunity to improve the primitive Lone Pine Canyon road and extend it to Hunters Flat at the foot of Mt. Whitney. Now pack trains as well as hikers could take advantage of this spectacular mountain. At that time Mt. Whitney was the highest in the United States with views of the eastern escarpment of the Sierra Nevada and the valleys and deserts to the east. In order to publicize this area of Hunters Flat and the nearby trail, a dedication was planned for Memorial weekend of 1936. The Padre never tired of repeating that Inyo County and his parish included the highest and lowest points in the United States–Mt. Whitney and Death Valley, and he joined with other members of the Lone Pine Jubilee Association to help plan the accompanying festivities. They scheduled a free barbecue paid for by local business contributions. In charge of collecting these funds was Father Crowley, assisted by Jack Hopkins. Jack was the local hardware store owner, and later an Inyo County Supervisor.

The *Inyo Independent* noted that the "name Hunters Flat connotes nothing, merely being a name given it years ago because that area was used as a base by hunters, move is now on foot to change the name of

this new recreational area to something of more meaning."[74] The Lions Club, of which Father Crowley was a member, recommended "Whitney Gates," whereas the *Inyo Independent* favored the name of "Whitney Pines." In the end, it was the U.S. Forest Service Supervisor, Roy Boothe, who decided on the name of "Whitney Portal," which the area still bears. The adjacent falls were called Whitney Falls. Governor Merriam, other state officials and the metropolitan newspaper reporters were invited to the celebration. The press was given a tour of the entire Owens Valley, hoping that publicity would pay off in increased tourist trade. The big weekend came and all went off as planned–stories appeared in many California papers and nation-wide.The Governor stayed the three days of the weekend and more than 2,000 people enjoyed the barbecue. The ball was rolling and the engendered enthusiasm lightened the spirits of depressed Owens Valley dwellers. Many more projects were to come and the energetic Padre, whom Harry Carr of the *Los Angeles Times* called the "head booster for the valley,"[75] played a major role.

Soon another group was formed which had a lasting impact on the fortunes of Owens Valley. In the fall of 1935 a casual meeting was held on the steps of the Independence Courthouse. Present at this meeting were the two old friends–Father Crowley and Ralph Merritt–ready to fight for the interests of the people of Owens Valley, along with William McCarthy, a local engineer, and George Savage, the young publisher of the *Inyo Independent*. Shortly after that day they invited other interested citizens to join them and held their first meeting on September 28, 1935 as reported in the *Inyo Independent:*

"Organization of a county committee of representative citizens, which would serve as a non-political and non-partisan group to discuss and correlate viewpoints and actions on various all-county problems, as well as initiate beneficial measures for the county is foreseen following an informal meeting of 16 residents representing Bishop, Independence and Lone Pine which was held last Saturday evening. The meeting was held in the office of Jess G. Sutliff [attorney from Independence].

"The purpose of the group as seen by those present, is to fill a need for a central committee, the name of which has not yet been decided upon, which might discuss and act upon measures of mutual benefit and lead in securing cooperation in working for the best interests of the county.

"With a view toward making the organization a formal group, properly selected from the various communities a committee was appointed Saturday to bring recommendations as to organization into a second

meeting of the group to be held on Monday Oct. 14. These recommendations will be carried back to the communities later.

"The organization sub-committee, as appointed by W.R. McCarthy, who was elected temporary chairman, is composed of Glenn Tinder, Jess G. Sutliff, Ralph Merritt, Howard Ellis and Geo. W. Savage and the Rev. J.J. Crowley.

"Representatives were invited to attend Saturday's meeting from every area in the county. Those who could be present were: Mr. McCarthy, S.W. Lowden, Dr.J.C. Baxter, Joe Riley, Jess G. Sutliff, R.J Bandhauer, Ralph Merritt, Geo. Savage, Jack Hopkins, George Terry, Allie W. Robinson, G.W. Dow, Howard Ellis, the Rev. J.J. Crowley, W.A. Chalfant and Glenn Tinder.

"Among matters commented upon as of general interest to which the committee might direct attention were: the Death Valley-Mt.Whitney road; possibility of securing a state park for the county; consideration of mutual cooperation by Bishop and Lone Pine in their annual Homecoming and Jubilee celebrations; and relationships with the City of Los Angeles."[76]

On October 15 they met again and decided on the name of Inyo Associates and drew up by-laws and elected officers. The first officers were: William McCarthy of Bishop, chairman; Howard Ellis of Lone Pine, vice-chairman; Glenn Tinder of Bishop as secretary. One member each from the towns of Big Pine, Olancha, Keeler, Panamint, Darwin and Death Valley Junction; seven each from Bishop, Lone Pine and Independence and three ex-officio members made a total of 30 members. The ex-officio members at the time were T.R.(Ray) Goodwin, Acting Superintendent of Death Valley National Monument; S.W. Lowden, State Highway Engineer; and Roy Boothe, Supervisor of the Inyo National Forest. Father Crowley was vice-chairman of the Forests and Parks committee and the Publicity, Promotion and Public Relations committee and a member of the History and Landmarks committee. Other committees were Highways and Trails, Fish and Game, and Mines and Mining. The chairman, William McCarthy was an ex-officio member of every committee. There were no dues but members were asked to contribute their time and energy.

On June 8, 1936 a letter was sent out by the chairman appointing a new committee on Relations with the City of Los Angeles composed of Ralph Merritt, as chairman, and Roland Giroux of Big Pine, George Savage and Rev. John J. Crowley.

It should be noted that the Inyo County supervisors were at first

against the Associates as they feared it might lessen their political power and declined any monetary support. All county officers were accordingly excluded from membership in the new organization. The members of the Masonic Lodges objected to having a priest lead them; some Protestants claimed he was doing all this to strengthen the influence of the Catholic Church. Even Father Crowley's own parishioners and his priest colleagues were not all supportive of his civic involvement. They thought he should not meddle in economics or politics. Nevertheless, he continued his efforts, ever conscious that the care of souls was futile if their bodily needs were not first met. He saw his work in the Associates as an extension of his parish work and his concerns were for the economic welfare of the entire county. H. A. Van Norman, successor of William Mulholland as Chief Engineer for the Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, at his first meeting with the Inyo Associates reportedly said: "Father Crowley, we own Owens Valley. We propose to have no interference. There are no issues for discussion."[77] With these unpropitious beginnings, but with high hopes the Inyo Associates settled down to do their work.

Father Crowley was quick to see that tourism would be the future bread and butter of the Owens Valley and even to some extent of the whole of California:

> *April 17, 1938.* I may be in error, but I believe the tourist trade is California's biggest crop. It surpasses oil and agriculture and the movies as a revenue producer. And in a region such as Inyo and Mono Counties, the tourist is not, in most instances, from without the state. He is usually a Californian and a city dweller. An official of the Automobile Club of Southern California informed me recently that graphs of the growth of population south of the Tehachapi indicate that 6.5 million people will be living in the coastal plain of Southern California by 1950. When six and a half million people decide to go fishing or camping or skiing they will require a lot of territory. In those days the thousands of lakes and the myriad streams in the High Sierra will come into their own as the greatest playground in the world, in area and variety, with the limitless desert thrown in for good measure.
>
> It is odd to sit here and look across the flowering almond and the glowing peach blossoms at the cars dashing by with skis and ski poles fastened to their tops, bound for the snow sports north of Bishop. In July we shall be lolling amid the paintbrush and the lupines up by McGee Creek, today they are running slaloms and making Christianias up there. Two winters have sufficed to work this latest marvel in Eastern California. Now the Padre, who had grown accustomed to a congregation in hiking breeches and hunting jackets, is wondering where they can park their skis while they kneel in

all the gaiety of their picturesque Alpine snow raiment. Since the fishing season opens this year on Sunday, May Day, he is already planning a Fisherman's Mass to be said in the wee small hours and to enable the anglers to be at their favorite pool before the sun tops the White Mountains. The only Maypole Inyoites are familiar with is that which has hook and line attached.

Soon then the horde will be upon us, and we shall begin the ceaseless round of answers to the same fool questions that have been asked since Los Angeles discovered Inyo. "Does the wind blow like this always?" "What is the white stuff on the mountains. That can't be snow?" "Are there any snakes in this room?" "Were there ever any trout in this lake?" and so on. And we shall smile and bite our lips and keep from saying the easiest word, for these are babes in the woods. Or in the desert. Like the ladies who came from Boston to Death Valley and engaged Johnny Mills, who is on hand for such purposes, to act as their guide on an auto tour about the valley. Johnny sat in luxury on the front seat of the Packard and extended his Irish wit and his desert lore to the limit for the benefit of the visitors, who appeared to be highly impressed. He senses a sizeable tip at the day's end. A question about the Indians led him to a lengthy description of Panamint Tom and Indian George, during which he leaned far back across the seat and gestured to the awestruck tenderfeet in the rear. He reached a forceful climax and paused. Without a doubt they were speechless in amazement. But no, here was a query. "And to what tribe do you belong?" Shades of Finn McCool!

Then there was that lady at the Grand Canyon who heard someone speak of the cattle guards on the Arizona roads. Forthwith she asked a ranger if the cattle guards wore a uniform like that of the National Park employees so that she might recognize them!

Inyokel liked to give a boost to the sturdy packers who were on the front lines when it came to tourism in the Sierra:

March 28, 1937. Ted Cook and Frank Chrysler are grooming their stock for the Auto Club Outing Show in Los Angeles in mid-April. For when the boys prepare to tell the world, or that major portion of it included within Los Angeles' city limits, that we have up here "the rootin'est, tootin'est, shootin'est, hootin'est country ye ever saw, whar the fish gang up on ye and even the cayuses stop to look at the scenery," and the city folk begin to forget home and mother and to oil up the old reel and cross-stitch the sleeping bag–why she's spring an' no foolin'.

And:

May 1, 1938. The age of heroes is not o'er. Given the occasion, there will

always rise up men who will forget self and plunge into the raging torrent, dash into the roaring furnace, grasp the handle of a snow shovel in July. Yes, dear friends, while you sit in luxury watching the mercury climb into the 100 class and sip your iced tea and mop your neck, there are men, brothers of ours, who are shovelling snow off the trails of the high Sierra. What care they for the softness of civilization, the sweet voices of sirens, the tenderness of the little vine-clad and sizzling homes in the valleys–they have turned their backs upon it all and are bending their backs for humanity, shovelling snow from the mountain passes. Besides the ice-pack they sit and munch their sandwiches or gulp their soup up there in the great silences. There is no warning whistle to recall them to their task, but they fall to with a will, chopping, pushing, trampling the ice and snow to make a path for the hikers and the fishermen who must pass this way, travelers who will pass oblivious of the mortified men who have left home and mother to shovel snow in July! When little Billy cries tonight and tosses sleepless upon his torrid couch, lull him to slumber by telling him of the deeds of these brave souls. Lest we forget, lest we forget.

The above was "writ sarcastic" after Ted Cook, a leading light among the packers, dropped in to inform me one equatorial afternoon that the trail crew had cleared the snow from Whitney Pass. It did not improve my general attitude towards men and things a whit to know that now I might ride to the top of the United States or wend my way down the other side to virgin fishing grounds in Hitchcock Lakes or the Kern River and its tributaries. For Ted well knew that I was chained to my hut amid the radiant rocks of the valley, and that Whitney and golden trout were simply dangerous and upsetting temptations. Ted had a letter with him from a prospective patron in Los Angeles asking, besides fishing facts, whether or not there was a Catholic church in Lone Pine. I was present when he read it to the Padre, who promptly countered with, "Were you coming over to ask me?" and then unfurled an epistle of his own from a doctor in San Diego who had requested him to find out if there was a packer in Lone Pine, where the best fishing was, etc. Thus it came to pass that the shepherd sent forth the prices and places of horses and fishes, and the horseman broadcast the times and the places of Masses, all in all a thoroughly Christian procedure.

He was able to give them another pat on the back as well as provide a vivid picture of the Outing Show for those who could not attend:

May 1, 1938. Down in the great court of the Automobile Club of Southern California at Los Angeles they gather each year a fascinating melange of trailers, pup tents, fishing tackle, hiking pants and jimcracks and call it an Outing Show. Last year, 175,000 people trooped through the turnstiles to enjoy a vicarious vacation in the five day exposition. By the time these lines

appear in print a number of those who last week stood in awe at the skill of the fly-caster or applauded the Pageant of the Thirteen Flags of California or stuffed their pockets with a hundred leaflets from the booths will have been accurately tabulated. All I know is that in 1938 as in former years, the entry that was always framed in a crowd was Chrysler and Cook's pack train from Lone Pine. Whether Leppy Diaz, gorgeous in checkered shirt and scroll-stitched boots that he would not dare wear at home, was showing how kayaks are hung astride a mule and fastened with a diamond hitch, or whether the Roundup pals were chanting "The Strawberry Roan" as they sat cross-legged by the open fire, or whether–and this always "wowed" them, Margaret Cook was serving mulligan and biscuits to the crew spread around the table by the tents–the children of the city hung six-deep on the corral ropes and gazed with envy upon the children of the open spaces.

The boys deserve a lot of credit for this annual appearance in Los Angeles. It is no easy accomplishment to transport four or five pack animals, including a spindly foal, 250 miles, with all the necessary equipment for a complete camp, and set up camp and maintain it for a week in the heart of a city. I was privileged to behold their arrival this year, and watched them in a few hours transform a bare asphalt-paved plaza into a tree-shaded Sierra rendezvous in the most approved Hollywood manner. A plaster model of Mt. Whitney was lifted atop the grub box, and its base concealed in a screen of pinyons and sugar pine and cedar, with juniper and manzanita in the faked canyon below. Three or four of the imitation rocks left by a movie company at Lone Pine had been brought down in the truck, too, and about their base sagebrush instantly sprang up. Tents rose in a semicircle around the campfire, a log cabin faced the audience and acted as display rack for photographs of the sportsman's paradise reached by the pack train. A hitching rack held the saddles and ropes, and there the animals were loaded hourly. Between the tents tall birches grew miraculously out of the bitumen, owing to the digging of Bruce Morgan and Jack Hopkins, who had chopped them from the banks of Lone Pine Creek. I am sure even the boys themselves felt that they were many leagues from West Adams and Figueroa when they crawled into their sleeping bags after a day filled with a never-lifting barrage of questions. When all the mob had departed there must have been a sweet content in dropping off to slumber with the whinny of a horse in your ears, the smell of the pines and the sage in your nostrils, the fire a gold beacon beckoning into the land of dreams.

Undoubtedly the next most attractive feature, from the point of B.O. (box office, not body odor), was Tex Cushion's sled dogs from Mammoth Lakes. The malemutes would have drawn even more attention if they could have been hitched to a sled or placed in a more natural setting–they looked sadly cramped in their cage. I hope that in another season these two aspects of the Inyo-Mono region, the summer and winter sports, can be pictured

side by side in becoming fashion. If Death Valley could also be included in the exhibit, with its wealth of dramatic and tourist interest, Eastern California would steal the show.

Tex's dogs are real Alaskan huskies, and play a valuable part in the winter life of the Mammoth Lakes area. Tex mushes over the country up there in the days when no other means of transportation is available, delivering mail and supplies to isolated miners and mountaineers. Not infrequently his sled has served as an ambulance to bring an injured man out to medical aid. It was to be expected that animals at home in the deep snow should suffer in the warm spell following Easter in Los Angeles, and the poor brutes had a bad afternoon until their quarters were completed and floored with a quarter of a ton of snow furnished by an ice-shaving machine. Once inside the enclosure they flattened themselves out on the snow, like lizards on a sunny rock. A vagrant thought of mine that day was that they had cavorted in the snow up at Mammoth last spring, and as it melted the water ran off into the Los Angeles aqueduct. Finally it reached the City's reservoirs and was drawn off into the tanks of the ice company to be frozen.Thence it was transported to the Auto Club to be crushed for the use of the huskies, shall we say again? Anyhow, that's what happened.

14

THE WEDDING OF THE WATERS

Improvement of county roads was a prime objective of the Inyo Associates. Since the Padre was on the road so frequently, he enthusiastically joined with others to press for the construction of the highway connecting Lone Pine to Death Valley. Funds had to be obtained from the state for this project and many delays were encountered:

> *February 16, 1936.* It was recently pointed out to the State Highway Commission that the sum set aside for the completion of the Mt. Whitney–Death Valley Highway, the link between the top and bottom of the nation, was pitifully inadequate. Twenty-five thousand dollars, the sum allotted from the biennial budget for 1935-36, would be less than what it took to add another lane to a bridge in the Southland or to plant sea-figs on a by-pass embankment. When local businessmen heard that there is a contingency fund available for certain roads, they asked whether some of that could not be appropriated for this needed improvement. The answer given by Mr. Lowden, the capable division engineer, was that the brush fires last summer on the Malibu Ranch near Santa Monica had caused the Department of Public Works to fear floods and landslides across the coast highway there this winter; hence they were holding funds in reserve for this contingency. Little did we think when we read about the movie stars being routed from their cabins by forest fires that it meant for us another couple of years of gruelling driving from here to Death Valley, a few more tons of dust per capita to be assumed and consumed. It is a small world.

The wheels of the bureaucracy moved slowly but surely, and a year later Father Crowley was elated to report that the new Mt. Whitney–Death Valley Highway would soon be a reality. The Padre was asked by his colleagues to be the general chairman for the dedication ceremony. He took this task on with great gusto and imagination. His talents as a director of plays and his organizational abilities combined to produce one of the most memorable events of Owens Valley. He proposed a pageant which would honor the pioneers of the mountains and Death Valley. Six months before the event, plans were being made. He informed

the public in early May about the general outlines of the dedication ceremony:

> *May 2, 1937.* The plans outlined here were first openly discussed at a recent meeting at Furnace Creek Ranch, Death Valley, on the day when the Masons of the county had gathered for some degree work on the valley floor. Many of the officials of the forest and park service, highways, etc., as well as local leaders, are members of the Masonic fraternity, so they seized on this opportunity to begin action on the dedication program. The Padre and three others at the luncheon were the only non-Masons in the group, which furnished the wags with material for fun. Thus Dewey Albright, our only undertaker, was in the spirit of the day when he slipped up behind our pastor and whispered for all to hear, "Padre, some of these fellows down at my end of the table are visitors, and they want to know why all of us have our collars tied in front except you." "Dewey, I shall answer you at the proper time," was the response. The proper time came a few minutes later when the priest was called on for his ideas anent the highway opening, and prefaced his speech by "I must first answer a question which is perturbing my friend Dewey Albright. He wants to know why I wear my collar backwards. My only answer is, 'To distinguish me from the jackass that asked the question'." It is reliably reported that Dewey crawled under the table to escape the ribbing that followed, and the next week's *Inyo Independent* found space to detail the incident in its account of the Death Valley doings.

The general committee consisted of Father Crowley as chairman, Joe Riley of Bishop, Ralph Merritt, Ray Goodwin, Roy Boothe, W.A. Crosby, George Savage and Harry Gower. As manager of the Pacific Coast Borax Company in Death Valley, Harry Gower offered $100 to start the ball rolling on publicity and promised time on the *Death Valley Days*' broadcast along with the possible use of the 20-mule team. The many friends the Padre had made in the business and government community helped him obtain their cooperation. The Padre designed special stationery for the event which included a list of the 32 members of the Honorary Committee and a map of the road from Lake Tulainyo in the Sierra to Bad Water in Death Valley. The names included editors or publishers of newspapers from the *Los Angeles Times* to the *Barstow Printer-Review* and others. On the list were E.F. Scattergood and H.A. Van Norman of the Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power, bank presidents, railroad executives, Bishops and the Automobile Club of Southern California, and representatives from county, state and federal government. The honorary President was Governor Frank Merriam who was a principal participant in the ceremony.

Suggested as part of the ceremony was the 20-mule team from the Pacific Coast Borax Company. The Padre reported on the problems relating to this aspect of the pageant:

> *October 17, 1937.* How completely we have come to rely upon machines is never more evident than when you try to revive the horse and buggy days, even for a parade. Or when you try to assemble 20 mules that can be trained to respond to a jerk line and avoid entangling themselves in singletrees and drag chains when they turn corners. That is the problem facing the Pacific Coast Borax Company, which agreed to enter one of its old borax wagons and 20 mules in the pageant marking the dedication of the Mt. Whitney–Death Valley Highway this month. It cost the company nearly $5,000 to perform a like task at the time of the Bay Bridge opening in San Francisco and the state-wide search necessitated by the latest attempt is proving so costly that there is real danger that the wagons may never roll again.

On October 29, 1937 the big day arrived after months of preparation and excitement on the part of the entire community. Persons attending were asked to come in period costumes. Accordingly, the Padre donned the old-fashioned parson's attire complete with hat. Ladies appeared in long dresses and calico bonnets, and children in appropriate dress, along with men in various styles of garb representing old-time prospectors, miners, cowhands, stagecoach drivers, etc.–all gave an air of authenticity to the event.

The 1937 annual edition of the *Central California Register* included an article entitled "The Wedding of the Waters," a name the Pageant was romantically given by the Padre. Since he was most familiar with the event, he probably provided the details of the story or wrote the unsigned article himself. It follows:

"'To mark the opening of a new eighteen mile link in the Mt.Whitney–Death Valley Highway, the people of Inyo County staged a celebration the like of which could not have been held anywhere else in the world.'

"Thus did *Westways*, official publication of the Auto Club of Southern California, describe Inyo's big show of October 29, 30 and 31, 1937. One official of that club wrote later that this was the 'only real highway opening ever held in California.' Said *California Highways and Public Works*, official journal of the Division of Highways and Public Works, 'California never has witnessed a more colorful, picturesque and unusual celebration than this, featuring a pageantry of the past that never will again be staged in the West.' The National and Columbia radio chains gave country-wide hookups to the dramatization of the dedication, the press

of the nation spread pictures of the water-bearers on its front pages, even succinct *Time* gave half a column to Inyo, the forgotten hinterland of California.

"Catholics of Monterey-Fresno will be interested in the story of those dramatic days in the eastern portion of the diocese, for all the events took place within the borders of the parish of Inyo, centering at Lone Pine. The two women who received the attention of all were Mrs. Agnes Lindner,the octogenarian daughter of the first white child to be carried through Death Valley in 1849 by the party which gave the Valley its name, and Miss Josephine Breen of Hollister, great-granddaughter of Patrick Breen, hero of the Donner tragedy of 1847. Both Mrs. Lindner and Miss Breen are Catholics, and were present at the outdoor Mass offered at Lone Pine during the celebration. The general chairman of the dedication was Monsignor John J. Crowley, pastor of the Inyo Catholic Missions. He had been unanimously elected to that post by the business and professional men of the region, and throughout they gave him the remarkable cooperation that was responsible for the extraordinary success of the affair.

"Many factors contributed to the possibility of a road dedication without precedent. For instance, not every road joins the top and bottom of a nation. The new link did just that, enabling the motorist to drive in safety from Bad Water in Death Valley, 279.6 feet below the level of the sea, to Whitney Portal, 8300 feet in elevation, at the actual base of the tallest peak, Mount Whitney, 14,496 feet. North of Whitney a mile or so lies Lake Tulainyo, 12,865 feet high, the highest lake on the continent, while Bad Water is the lowest water in the Western Hemisphere. The lack of a road to Tulainyo made the use of an Indian runner the most logical choice; the paralleling of part of the highway by the longest narrow-gauge railroad in America brought the Iron Horse into the picture in proper historical sequence; the only place at which a telephone line crossed the new artery was at the very spot where the new construction began, enabling the President of the United States to flash the signal officially opening the highway, the existence of a great playa at Panamint Valley permitting a takeoff by airplane at the proper juncture in the transportation pageant: all of these works of God and man lent themselves so naturally to the program that they could be well called providential.

"Early on the morning of Friday, October 29 Jerry Emm, Washoe Indian runner from Nevada who had been chosen for the honor in a previous elimination contest, dipped a gourd into the icy waters of Lake

Tulainyo, from whose banks the snow never melts. The gourd, specially prepared and donated by the President of the International Gourd Association, Mr. Joe Parks of Los Angeles, was to carry the crystal clear tears of the clouds down the Sierra slopes and across the sands to Bad Water's alkaline depths for such a wedding as America had never known. With the easy lope of his forefathers the Indian traversed rock slides and meadows, forests and chaparral until, exactly a mile nearer sea level, he burst from the thicket at Whitney Portal late that afternoon. It was the end of the Red Man's domain, the terminus of the White Man's highway.

"The Indian band played 'The Waters of Minnetonka' as Russell Spainhower, impersonating the Pony Express riders of old, leaped into his saddle and, with gourd hanging straight out behind him, galloped off down the canyon. Five miles below in the dusk another horse and rider waited, Ted Cook was ready to carry on. Down the switchbacks of the road half a hundred cars, spaced and paced by State Highway patrolmen, crept along in a veritable river of light, a chain of fire visible for leagues, telling the world that the water had begun its three-day journey. Into the dark raced Ted, to be met on Ruiz Hill, another seven miles east, by Bert Johnson, son of the man who first climbed Mount Whitney. There were lumps in cheering throats as his horse clattered down the traffic-cleared street to the bank, where Bill Boyd of movie fame stood ready to deposit the gourd in the vault until the morning.

"A little of the water was drawn from the gourd and served to Governor Merriam at the trout dinner that had been prepared for him and a score of national and state officials in Inyo for the fiesta. While he and a hundred others thus dined to the music of a genuine Mexican orchestra the county amused itself at wrestling matches, dancing, amusements galore.

"Saturday morning it was the Governor who stood upon the steps of the bank and handed the gourd to Sam Ball, the prospector veteran of fifty-one years on the desert. Sam tied the container on the back of his burro and trudged away to the south. Before the church stood parked a genuine covered wagon, one which had been driven from Missouri to Yolo County in 1849 by John Bremmerly. In the shafts a pair of spirited oxen fretted and through the canvas archway peered comely Josephine Breen, descendant of the Donner Party. Her costume of the period made the picture perfect, and the newspaper photographers did not miss the opportunity. The water was handed to her by Sidney Chester Doty, grandson of that Captain Ed Doty who had led the Jayhawker party through

Death Valley. Beside Chester walked his father and his uncle, the latter trailing the identical gun that his father had brought to California on that harrowing journey. With them, also proud to repeat the covered wagon expedition of her mother, went Mrs. Agnes Lindner, daughter of Melissa Bennett.

"Two miles south stamped a genuine twenty-mule team hitched to one of the original borax wagons for the last time. At the jerk line sat Johnny O'Keeffe, a pioneer mule-skinner. Even the driver of the ox-team confessed a thrill when Johnny, the gourd cradled safely on the driver's seat, clicked his tongue and the rippling muscles of the mules marked the thrust with which they began to pull their burden on its historic trek.

"Another mile, and a real stagecoach standing by the highway, Mount Whitney–Death Valley painted on its sides. Ollie Dearborn, who used to handle the lines in the seventies and eighties, rode the box, but Governor Merriam insisted on climbing up beside him. As the State's chief executive rode away, the Doty gun tucked in the crotch of his arm, the Padre at the microphone sang out 'Buck Merriam rides again!' Such was the spirit of those happy days.

"Where the highway crosses the narrow-gauge tracks, eight miles from Lone Pine, an old-time locomotive panted, and behind it all the passenger rolling stock for this branch that the Southern Pacific owns. The car deluxe, in which the Governor traveled, had iron beds and tin bathtubs. With Engineer Jim Henry carefully guarding the gourd in the cab, a wildly cheering mob rocked along to Keeler, scores sitting on the roofs of the cars or climbing to the platforms. At Keeler the water was left in custody of the Talc Company until the morrow. The Governor and his party returned to Lone Pine for the unique parade, featuring all the modes of transportation California has known and scores of horsemen on hand for the rodeo. Again a night of dancing, outdoor shows by movie-stars, sharpshooting, rock-drilling, street-singing–what a holiday!

"Early Sunday morning Mass on the church lawn, with the pioneers and tourists and townsmen apparelled as forty-niners, cowboys and gay caballeros. Then a race to Keeler, where Jim Henry had his train drawn up at the platform for the water transfer to the 1938 Lincoln Zephyr, the first public appearance of that model in California. Louie Meyer, three-time winner at Indianapolis took the gourd from the engineer and was off with a roar for the point of dedication, on the summit of the Argus Range, twenty-five miles away. There the Governor and the officials were already stationed, close by the temporary telegraph

instrument set up by Western Union to receive the President's signal from Hyde Park. Promptly at eleven-thirty it came, clear in the hush achieved by a word of warning to the crowd. Instantly Captain Hardy and two members of the Los Angeles' Sheriff's Pistol Team fired a volley which severed the blue ribbon held taut across the road, blasting open the highway in true Western fashion. The Los Angeles Police Band struck up the 'Star Spangled Banner,' and as the last note rang out over the sagebrush Josephine Breen advanced to the severed tape and joined hands with Chester Doty, approaching from the Death Valley side. The mountains and the desert had been joined, the descendants of the two parties who had suffered in the heat and the snow of California thus symbolized the smashing of the barriers that had spelled death for their forefathers. Chester and Josephine then climbed into the Zephyr and were whisked over the new road down to Panamint Sink, followed by the hundreds of cars in the autocade. Out on the clay bed of Panamint Valley rested a great white bird, the first plane to land on the spot now used as an emergency field by T.W.A. Captain Carey, World War flyer, was handed the precious water by Meyer, and the graceful ship was soon skimming the dried adobe surface and spiralling off towards Telescope Peak, highest uninterrupted lift of any mountain on the continent, for it rises from below sea level. Over the range he dropped to the landing field at Furnace Creek in Death Valley, there to await the spectators following by car. En route the travelers paused for a barbecue at Stovepipe Wells, the second such free event to grace as many days.

"There was no doubt in the minds or hearts of those who followed the water that the last scene was the most impressive in a triduum of thrills.

"The sun had just dropped behind Telescope as the plane appeared over a rise just south of the depression called Bad Water, which nestles against the cliffs on the east side of the Valley. With the swoop of an eagle it came straight over the glassy pool, a fine spray shooting down from an opening in the cockpit. T.R. Goodwin, Superintendent of Death Valley National Monument, was emptying the gourd. For a moment the watchers wondered if the water would ever reach the surface, but only for a moment. Upon the placid mirror a few drops appeared, then a gentle shower, coming from nowhere, passing like a breeze across the pond. Jose Arias's Mexican players strummed 'I Love You, California.' The crystal waters of American's highest lake had been joined with America's lowest, the Wedding of the Waters was o'er.

"Up from the side of the pool shot a pillar of flame, the signal fire

that would tell the watchers on the peaks that the pageant had ended, that Death Valley and Mt. Whitney had been linked forever. On Dante's View, six thousand feet above, the Boy Scouts caught the message, and set the torch to their pyre. Across on Telescope Hank Jones and two other Scouts touched off the huge pile of dead piñon trees gathered there by the sons of the Indians who had seen the mother of Mrs. Lindner enter Death Valley nearly a century ago. On Cerro Gordo, thirty miles distant, the watchers saw, and their fire soon glowed yellow in the dusk. At Lone Pine the cry went up, 'The water's gone through, Cerro Gordo's ablaze!' And they turned to Whitney. There, from the top of the nation, a tongue of light ascended to the stars. Norman Clyde, famed mountaineer, had not failed in his lonely and perilous task. It was he who wrote 'Finis' to California's greatest highway dedication, and the hundreds gathered in the town square at Lone Pine sang 'America' with full hearts as the flame and the fiesta faded into the night.

"The chairman of one of the committees came to the Padre after all was over and expressed himself: 'It was a good thing we selected somebody close to the Lord to manage this affair for us, for the weather was perfect. I remember you used to say to us at the meeting when somebody would worry about the possibility of seasonal bad weather, you would reassure us, "Don't fret. Just attend to your own committee work. The weather is within the province of my committee." ' What the Padre did not tell them was that he had subdelegated the weather problem to the Patroness of Monterey-Fresno, the Little Flower, for all these doings were within her diocese. To her, under God, is due the credit for Inyo's biggest show."[78]

Inyokel had a few comments that gave the story behind the story of the event:

> *Nov.ember 14, 1937.* Highlights from the Mt.Whitney–Death Valley Highway dedication–Mrs. Bennett, clasping her two-year old daughter Melissa, to her heart, never ceased to pray during the long vigil in Death Valley in '49, and her cry upon the return of Manly was a fervent "Thanks be to God." Mrs. Patrick Breen recited her rosary and Litany for nine days at Donner Lake in 1847 while her husband endeavored to coax her to feed the children portions of the bodies of those who had died, a grim repast in which the rest of the party had already shared, but she would not consent. On the ninth day help came. On the Feast of the King of Kings Melissa Bennett's daughter and Mrs. Patrick Breen's great-granddaughter attended Mass on the lawn of the Padre's church. They had returned for the linking of the Sierra and desert. Another attendant was the Rev. Mr. E.W. Mecum, Baptist

minister from Los Angeles, himself the son of one of the Jayhawker party which parted from the Bennetts in Death Valley. A photographer for *Life* snapped pictures throughout the Mass ... Afterward he assembled many of the congregation who were dressed in old-fashioned costumes and posed them for a group ... Several were non-Catholics ... The altar steps were of travertine from Death Valley. As the Padre stood on them, he could look over the heads of the congregation at Mt. Whitney.

The Padre drove Jose Arias and his Mexican orchestra up to Whitney Portal for the arrival of Jerry Emm, the Indian runner, with the water from Lake Tulainyo. The rapidly climbing road and the drop to Owens Valley had the customary effect on city visitors. "Padre, Padre, be careful." "This is nothing," replied our pastor. "I'll bet that if we had two more miles of this I could get the whole carload of you to go to Confession." "*Si, Padre, con mucho gusto*"...Jack Hopkins had provided a piece of burlap sacking for Russ Spainhower, who was to play the part of the Pony Express Rider, to wrap the gourd in to prevent injury in his ride. But at "Godspeed, Pony Express!" Russ got away so fast, with the gourd strung out straight behind him, that Jack was left standing open-mouthed. Bill Boyd, the movie cowboy, was afraid of slipping on the town pavement, hence would not carry the gourd on the last relay from Whitney into Lone Pine. Not so, Bert Johnson, son of the first man to climb Whitney. He clattered up to the bank like John Gilpin and Paul Revere rolled into one.

Sam Ball, the old desert rat who took the role of the burro man, resented the repeated posing and passing of the gourd for photographic purposes. He told the newsreel men that they were "making a damfool out of him" and that "all the boys are laughin' at me." The covered wagon was a bona fide prairie schooner which was driven across the desert into Yolo county in 1849 by John Bremmerly. It has been on exhibit for years, but has not rolled on its own wheels for a generation. There was real pathos in the attempt of the old men of the Mecum and Doty group, sons of the original Forty-niners, to keep up with the spirited oxen as they plodded along on their tryst with the twenty mule team. Neither the mules nor the oxen cared for each other's company, and did some haughty nose-lifting. The ox-tender confessed to a lump in his throat as he saw the muscles of the wheel mule ripple as he strained ahead at the signal. He was recalling that this was the last time the 20 mules will ever be assembled. Governor Merriam rode atop the stage-coach with Ollie Dearborn, old-time master of the reins. The Governor bore the rifle brought through Death Valley by Captain Doty of the Jayhawkers. From the loudspeaker a voice, "Buck Merriam rides again."

The Slim Princess, the proud passenger train of our hundred-and six-teen-mile narrow gauge railroad from Nevada to Keeler, was fitted out as never before. And probably as never again. For these were not freight cars, and behind the two baggage cars and the coach was attached the official car, with iron bedsteads, tin bathtubs, and all. Jess Hession, deputy state attor-

ney general, donned a brakeman's cap because he once held that post on this line, and tried to collect cash fares from the Governor, Fred Stewart, Chief Cato, and the rest. Scores rode on top of the cars for the six miles to Keeler, many of whom had never ridden on a train before. Lou Meyer, three-time winner at Indianapolis, seemed oblivious of the fact that the car carrying the gourd had arrived in California only the night before for a preview.

There was a genuine thrill in the hearing the click of the telegraph sounder as the President pressed the button at Hyde Park. The key he pressed was a nugget from the Mother Lode at Virginia City. At the instant, Captain Hardy, world-renowned sharpshooter, and two members of the Los Angeles sheriff's pistol team cut the ribbon with three bullets. The Los Angeles police band broke into the "Star Spangled Banner," and Josephine Breen clasped hands with Sidney Doty across the line of the fallen ribbon. Not all romance is dead. The water from the sky rose to the sky again from Panamint Dry Lake in the huge white plane that took it on the last leg of the journey, over Telescope Peak ... The lavender hush of twilight had fallen over Death Valley as the great bird swooped across the placid pool of Bad Water, and Ray Goodwin, Superintendent of the Monument, removed the stopper from the gourd and poured the waters of Tulainyo into the lowest lake in America. It descended as a gentle rain, a fitting "Wedding of the Waters." Jose Arias's players strummed "I Love You, California."

The yellow beacons instantly began to blaze on Dante's View, Telescope, Cerro Gordo, and Whitney, carrying the story back to Tulainyo. Inyo folk were happy at a job well done, a task that brought the county more publicity, says Will Chalfant in his *Inyo Register* "than any peaceful event in its history." The magazine *Time*, with its customary turn of phrase, said of the Wedding of the Waters that "the local citizenry hope that the offspring will be tourists." Here's hoping.

Another note in a subsequent column reported:

December 5, 1937. New behind-the-scenes tales of the recent highway dedication keep coming to the surface. There is Wash Cahill's story of his hidden worries while the affair was in progress. The Padre introduced Wash to the multitudes as "the nursemaid of the mules," since it had been his task to assemble the 20 mules and to put the borax wagons in readiness for their last trip. One of the mules had been deathly ill, probably from eating wild parsnip and there was much truth in Wash's monicker. "But that wasn't all," he told the Padre later. "I had more trouble with my men than with my mules. There were too many old-timers in town, and Johnny O'Keeffe and the swampers had me on edge trying to keep them from taking too much liquid entertainment aboard. You see, it takes two weeks to train a swamper even for work on paved highway–braking the wagons, watching the draglines,

and so on. But, in spite of all my watching, one of them went on a tear the night before the parade and I had to wire Death Valley for Brownie, who had learned how to swamp on the occasion of the San Francisco Bay Bridge opening, to come on at once. And Johnny O'Keeffe had met one too many old-timers, and, after I got him to bed he talked and swore all night at the mules, imagining he was driving them across the desert. About half-past two in the morning I couldn't stand it any longer and shouted to him to keep quiet. 'Whoaup-p-p,' he bellowed, stopping his imaginary animals. 'Whoaup!' and then he turned towards me. 'What was that you said!'" "Add to that," Wash went on, "the fear that one of the huge tires, they are a foot wide and six feet high, would work loose with the heat from the braking and from their poor purchase on the sun-shrivelled wheels and go reeling down the street into the governor's stand, and you'll have a faint idea of the reason for my high blood pressure during those days."

An aftermath of the pageant was a torrent of letters, especially from old-timers:

November 7, 1937. The advertising attendant upon the opening of the Mount Whitney–Death Valley Highway had resulted in a deluge of letters from old-timers who have long since left the desert in body, but not in spirit. I think J. A. Delameter's letter, almost too long for one installment, deserves reprinting for both its historic and its literary qualities.

Pico Oct. 23 1937 Cal

Gentlemen: I am very sorry in one way that I cannot atend your celebration I will begin with by saying I am 83 years old and have Spent most of my life in Southern Cal. My Father crossed the Plains in 1860 and I came to Southern Cal in 1874 and have Teamed and mined almost all over the Desert aspicialy Inyo Kirn and San Berdino. To begin with I am from Frentch and Scotch origin and as the most of the Pioneers in this Country wer Frentch I was connected and aquainted with a great miny of them So I am going ot try to give you Some of the Facts of Pioneer days and you can mingle it with your movi Parts and it may help you out Some at least make it more interesting.

As Roads is the Subject I will begin by saying that I haul the first load of Freight that I hauled on the Desert to Lone Pine to John Dodge who was keeping a store and Livery stable in Lone Pine and who had quite a number of Horses Killed by the Earth Quake Several years before and several People wer Killed also and Some wer Killed on this Dies Ranche above Lone Pine and I was shone some of the great cracks in the Earth by Averon Dies who was a friend of mine.

Owns River ran up stream for about 3 hours Leaving greate sholes of fish that Perished then turned and assumed a normal condition Owens Lake was several miles acrost and Ome Meres and Jack gun Built a Small Steam

Boat later for Plesure on the Lake and they Putaman the whole crew on the Boat He was captain Engneer and crew His name was Jim Iarzey and he was Killed by the R.R. near Mayview later the Boat caught afire and Burned up. Now there are many instences of interest that seems to me you Should have one was that a man at little Lake Killed his Pardner who cut him up and fed him to the Stage Pasingers. What a feast. Well to get Back to Roads again. I had a stage line to Keeler at one time it started at Majovi and the Indians got on the war Path and Killed two men near Red Rock and several at other Places Now when we Hauled from Bakersfield there wer two ways to get to the Desert-one came up the Calintie Some 16 miles to a Place now called Pampa and then turned East and climbed the mountain to Walkers Pass then to Havala then the county Seat of Kirn Co. then down to the Hot Springs then up the South Fork as the Roads Forked. here one went up the North Fork to the Old Big Blue mine whitch then had the largest mill in the world 80 stamps but the Road to the Desert left the River near the old Pruitt Ranch and crossed the mountains and come to the L A Road at Ramonds Coyote Holes then followed the main Road to near Indian Walls I owned this place later then there near what is now called Inyoe Kern the Roads forked again and the one to the East went up Mirit Canyoun to Darwin Panamint Baleret and all of those Places But the other Road Parted at the Walker Rantch and one went to Lone Pine and the other one went around the Lake to the East to the old Sirazorda Furnace.

Sirazorda Furnace was Built and owned by some People in Swansea they went Broke and the mine was taken over by a crowd of Los Angles Capitalist a Frentchman by the name of Chauvine in L A and another by the name of Ralston in San Francisco. He was then President of the Cal Bank and He later was the Backer of senitor Jones in the Panimint excitement in Death Valey and this is a story and he built the old Eagel Borax by its self then Nadeau took quite an Intrest and Bought all of the Water Places on the Road and shut us outSiders out and we were compelled to Build a Road round by way of San Berdino Granit Walls, and Lone Willow and up the Panimint Valey By what later was my old Road the Wingate Pass this Road I mean the Wingate Pass leads to Bennett Holes.

I notice you are now calling Bad Water now I want to say rite here that I used this water many years and it is the Best Water in Death Valley Baring None Now this is a large asirsion but I can Prove what I say there is a stratta of sand laying between two strattas of Kolini this Seems to come down from the mountain and until it mingles with the Valey water it is Perfectly Pure I dug 3 wells there and used this water meny years. Now Some one drilled through this Strata in to the Valey water this well first was Dug by a man by the name of Bennett so I have been told and He was a Morman and I was shone the first camp that he made about 3 miles farther down the valey and I think that there are Signs of his old camp there yet and there wer several

graves there when I first was there and I hauld meny of the old relicks away from Both camps

Now while we are on grave discourse why not Pay some atension to Some others also besides Dalton these others wer meny years ahead of Dalton Wm Shadley the Preasant Post Master of Mojaues Step Father Perished in Death Valey about 14 miles from Bennett Holes it was 28 days before we found him and he was mummified no odor from his Body and when we stood him up he almost stood alone Now he was a good man and a marter to Death valey and his Wife and Daughter are now living in Mojave.

Why not Pay Homage to some others who Died that you might now enjoy the luxery of a movi Farce that Seems to Forget the Real Pioneers who braved and endured the hardships of this then wild country Why not Pay Homage to the memory of Mr Harmon who was the manager for Jones when Panimint was in its Boom and there are many others just as deserving No long ago I was out to old Indian Georges Rantch near the mouth of Panimint Canyon as he wanted to see me He can tell you History that ought to interest even the movies Well I am Sure I must apoligize for this long scribel but a few years ago Dad Fairbanks told a crowd that when he and me died a great deal of Southern Cal would be bvried with us and I think that this is a fact But San Berdino Co is now asking me to write up its History So they can Preserve it I have Pictures of Shorty Haris and Dad Fairbanks and myself taken several years ago Resp you J A Delameter, Pico Cal

15

THE STRONG WARRIOR

The greatest challenges of all were the relations with the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. The Lone Pine Lions Club, the Inyo Associates and the citizens of Owens Valley were constantly on the alert to threats from the City of Los Angeles which would impinge upon their sovereignty.

One of the first, about April 1935, referred to Assembly Bill #1594 introduced by three Assemblymen from Los Angeles that would have denied the right of the people of Owens Valley to form incorporated cities and public bodies for the purpose of making public improvements without the permission of Los Angeles City Council, giving Los Angeles veto power over any future improvements. The intent of the bill was for the City to obtain more revenues by reducing tax assessment and also to encourage the disincorporation of the city of Bishop–the only incorporated city in Inyo County.The passage of this bill would have given the City a tighter control on the affairs of the entire region. Action by Inyo county assemblyman, Jesse M. Mayo convinced the other non-Los Angeles members to defeat the bill, 41-32, by appealing to their sense of justice and principles of self-government. This was one of the first victories for Owens Valley citizens in their efforts to retain control of their destiny. More were to come, but very slowly and painfully.

On January 24, 1936, the *Inyo Independent* announced that: "Plans for a friendly suit to have water rights near Lone Pine readjudicated were discussed last week by representatives of the Department of Water and Power of the City of Los Angeles and a group of Lone Pine citizens. The Department of Water and Power, anticipating a dry year, plans to withdraw water from all ranches and property which they have bought in vicinity of Lone Pine exclusive of property within the town itself, it was stated by those who attended the meeting. The Department plans to leave only the water which belongs to Lone Pine Water Co., and is not willing to guarantee that this will be sufficient for needs of the town.

"Representatives of the Department of Water and Power were Judge

J.M. Stevens, Judge C. Davis and Jimmy Jones. Lone Pine citizens present were Mr. and Mrs. Russell Spainhower, Father J.J. Crowley, G.W. Dow, Mr. and Mrs. Bert Johnson and Ben Bonham."[79]

Accordingly, the City filed its complaint on Feb. 5th and met with the Lone Pine Lions Club at lunch. Explaining the reasons and policies of their action. Judge Stevens said: "'In this matter the City is seeking to meet the people of Lone Pine more than half way, in realizing some return on the seven to eight hundred thousand dollars which has been invested by the City in this area.' The suit will be tried, we understand, to make certain necessary changes and to clarify the decisions made in a Lone Pine water case about 1902, which was tried before Judge Lucien Shaw.

"Judge Stevens also assured the Lions that 'it is not the purpose of the City to do anything to tear down Lone Pine or to halt its growth and development. The City plans to take no water from Lone Pine, although Lone Pine's needs now are more than its first right to the water. We have no desire to see the trees and vegetation within the community suffer and to those few farmers who have water rights on Lone Pine Creek, we are willing to bring them their legal flow by pipeline if they so desire... What the City does desire to do in this case is to be entirely free of possible injunctions or other action in taking the water which is now used on City-owned agricultural lands in Lone Pine area.' That this will decrease production of agricultural products to some measure and will limit the number of cattle possible to graze in the town area, was admitted... When asked if the amount of water, now the right of Lone Pine community, is enough for the town, the answer was 'No.' However, the City, the representatives said, will be willing to stipulate to the growing needs of the community.

"Concerning possible prices of property that may be sold, Judge Stevens stated that the department is planning a complete re-appraisal of the valley."[80]

Shortly after a meeting of the 59 Lone Pine defendants named in the Department of Water and Power complaint was held. The named defendants were owners of land and those who had water rights to Lone Pine Creek and watershed. The complaint stated that change of use of water owned by the City from agricultural use on the lands...to domestic and municipal uses in the City of Los Angeles, would be the dedication of such water to a higher and more beneficial use, a term which represented legal water rights precedents. In addition they were requesting that they be allowed to divert water from Lone Pine Creek by means of pipes or aqueducts.

A few weeks later nearly all of the 59 defendants were present at a meeting held in the Lone Pine court room. Father Crowley was asked to be chairman of the meeting. A committee was formed to secure information from the defendants concerning their water rights, to obtain legal counsel and to appear before the Board of Water and Power. The City's representative, Judge Davis allowed them another 30 days to answer assertions made by the City in the suit.

The *Inyo Independent* of March 6, 1936 had the following report on the meeting:

"Judge Davis answered several questions, noted in part as follows:

"Asked what right he had to speak for the department, he said:

"'It is based on a resolution of the Board giving us (the legal department) the right to proceed. It is No. 53, dated July, 1935.'

"Chairman Crowley: 'Judge, there are two recourses open to the defendants are there not? First, an action by the Board of Water and Power, and, second, a decision by the court'?

"Judge Davis:'Yes, that is true. The Board is the highest responsible authority in the Department of Water and Power.'

"Chairman: 'The people of Lone Pine wish to know why this so-called "friendly suit" is necessary?'

"Judge Davis: 'Necessity for this friendly suit is that ownership of the right to use water may be based on riparian rights, the right of appropriation and prescriptive rights. Since the City was faced by what appeared to be a greater need this year, it sought modification of the Shaw decree, and change of use of their agricultural water.'

"Chairman : 'Mr. Bonham, Russell Spainhower and Bert Johnson allege you made certain promises to them in a previous conference, which have not been specified in the complaint. Is that true?'

"Judge Davis: 'There evidently has been a misunderstanding in this regard. The complaint calls for an answer, or calls for a stipulation or settlement by agreement and the complaint tells the way we would do it. We do not want these folks to think that we reneged. They can make stipulations as to their desires or secure a judgment from the court. We will put in a pipeline for Mr. Spainhower, or put down a well or a pipeline for Bert Johnson and a pipeline and a reservoir for Ben Bonham. We have no intention of removing surface water in Lone Pine belonging to City-owned lots, constituting about 87 percent of the old town.'

"Chairman: 'Is it not true that because of greater rainfall and changing conditions, it might not be necessary to have this Lone Pine water, and the suit might be postponed?'

"Judge Davis: 'The statement you made is accurate. If you folks want to ask the Board to use the water and postpone the suit you can see what they'll say.'

"Chairman Crowley then asked about water for the Wiltfang Addition, and where it came from. Judge Davis replied, the property developed had no water, that it came from the town water supply and commented: 'Even though the City shares its water with the new tract, and you share it also, it is all right with us.'

"Jesus Carrasco: 'I would like to know what you intend to do with the 53 inches of surface water that the town owns'.

"Judge Davis: 'Leave it just as it is, according to the Shaw decree'.

"Late in the discussion, Chairman Crowley presented a notable series of comments on the situation, the relationship of the Lone Pine matter to the welfare of the entire valley, activity of the Inyo Associates in promoting better cooperation with and between the City and Valley, and challenged the City to abide by a 'higher right' in its dealings with people here.

"It is expected that within the next few days Chairman Crowley and others of the committee, as well as representatives of Inyo Associates and District Attorney George Francis, will meet with the water and power board.

"Presence of Judge Davis at the meeting helped to clear many questions. Chairman Crowley minced no words in stating Lone Pine's position, yet a feeling of cooperation and understanding of some of the problems came out of the gathering. In closing his comments, Chairman Crowley said good-humoredly, 'Judge Davis, I want to thank you for your coming, and assure you that we think we can lick you in this case, but we would like to talk it over.'"[81]

I quote the above not so much for its details of an intricate water problem (water problems always seem to be intricate), but to point out that one almost gets the impression that Chairman Crowley is a lawyer and not a parish priest! In George Savage's own light column "Off the Beaten Path" he has a short paragraph with the title of: "Arithmetic"-Dialogue at Monday night's water suit meeting in Lone Pine.

"Defendant-(Who wants assured water for her lot in Lakeview Addition)-'Well, what will we get at the Addition'.

"Mr. Chairman-'Subtraction.'"[82]

A few weeks later a news item in the *Inyo Independent* reads:

"Preparation of answers to the Lone Pine Water suit complaint filed by the City is now being worked on by Attorneys George Francis and

Jess G. Sutliff, who represent interests included in the 59 defendants to the suit.

"Last Monday night, when asked by the Inyo Associates to present a report on the Lone Pine matter, Father J.J. Crowley told how he and George Francis conferred with the Board of Water and Power commissioners in Los Angeles on Mar. 10. At that time the Board left the matter entirely in the hands of Judge James M. Stevens, attorney for the Board, with power to act."[83]

It seemed that the possibility of cooperation of the Board with the Valley was at a low ebb. The Board stated that no land was to be sold in the Valley -'"We paid three prices for the land and we don't intend to sell an inch of it.'" and furthermore: "The commissioners advised the committee without equivocation that no one in the Owens Valley should be guided by anything told them by any employee of the City of Los Angeles unless such employee had in his possession a certified copy of a resolution by the Board of Water and Power that the Board had decreed such statements or policy."[84] Apparently, the suit was no longer on "friendly" terms as was first believed.

"In a rude turnaround, after so much had been written in the local press about how much cooperation the City of Los Angeles was offering Owens Valley, Father Crowley reported at a subsequent meeting in Lone Pine details of his and Judge Francis' meeting with the City. He urged the defendants of Lone Pine to stand together to protect their rights.

"He emphasized the flagrant injustice of the Board of Water and Power in permitting its employees who ride in automobiles, bearing insignia of the Department of Water and Power and who work in its offices, to make statements which are later repudiated. Father Crowley related the statement of the Board that no attention is to be paid to any statement made by its employees unless backed by a written resolution and dubbed this 'child's play.'

"Father Crowley explained that there are two parts to the pending suit, settlement of rights to the water involved and privilege to take this water from Lone Pine to the aqueduct. A proposal that the suit relative to the first point be settled and that the second point be dropped for the time was vetoed, Father Crowley reported.

"He emphasized the fact that Lone Pine people are willing to admit the City's ownership of water by paying rent for use of it, but that they object only to having it taken out of the community. The City's argument that they may lose the right to the water through not using it is invalid, it was pointed out, due to the fact that Valley residents are pay-

ing rent for the privilege of using it.

"Should the City be successful in its suit, it will take the water from above the Badger estate and pipe it from there to the aqueduct, thus completely drying up the flow near the town. Residents in the Wiltfang Addition were advised that their rights were not in danger as their water could not be taken from them unless all other houses in town were denied water.

"The arguments for Lone Pine's right to live, to keep the trees about the town green in order to continue as the only natural oasis between Los Angeles and the fast-drying towns to the north, and between the bottom and top of the United States, or of the millions of dollars that were being poured into Los Angeles coffers from the movies that have been and would continue to be taken here, apparently moved the Board not at all, he reported.

"Father Crowley spoke vigorously against any recurrence of violence or dynamiting, saying that he had heard much muttering since the recent declaration of policies by the Board. He answered some of those present, who asserted that little other protection was left for poor defendants of the last green spot than dynamite, by saying that whatever justification such actions may have had in the past, one of the results had been that it gave representatives of the City a splendid opportunity to denominate the residents of Owens Valley as a crew of thugs and dynamiters and hence to be accorded little credit and dealt with as criminals. He counselled patience and vigilance, hoping that somehow, if only by a process of education, members of the Board could be brought to see the viewpoint of those who love and live in the Valley. But, he added, 'let us not sleep. Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.'

"After spending four days conferring not only with the Board of Water and Power, but with many other officials in Los Angeles, Father Crowley found that it was impossible to avoid the suit. It was therefore necessary for every defendant to retain a lawyer. Those present at the meeting agreed upon the importance of banding together to secure the best possible technical and legal advice."[85]

At this juncture, the Inyo Associates and their Committee on Relations with the City of Los Angeles took a more active role. Ralph Merritt, the chairman of this committee, did all in his power to move discussions forward. There were issues of the Bishop Pool, a group of Bishop merchants who requested the City to purchase their property at quite a high price. Los Angeles hinted that they might consider it if the town of Bishop would disincorporate. This became a source of discord with Joe

Riley, a merchant of Bishop, and a member of the Inyo Associates and George Savage, editor of the *Inyo Independent* and also an Inyo Associate, favoring disincorporation. On the opposite side was Will Chalfant, editor of the *Inyo Register* and also an Inyo Associate. A subsequent election in Bishop defeated Joe Riley who was running for city council, demonstrating that the majority of Bishop's citizens were opposed to disincorporation. It never happened. Today Bishop is still an incorporated town.

Meanwhile Father Crowley and Ralph Merritt worked together, discussing just how they could best approach the City of Los Angeles with their just demands without causing more bitterness for the Owens Valley citizens. They realized that they could not turn back the hands of time. Already the Commissioners of the Water Board and other City officials realized that the Inyo Associates was a competent group wholly dedicated to their task. Many of them were Masons as were some of the Los Angeles officials, and they had to listen respectfully to brother Masons. In March 1936 the Inyo Associates authorized Ralph Merritt to offer to the Board of Water and Power a six-point program for the development of the Valley. The six points, published in the March 20, 1936 issue of the *Inyo Independent* are summarized as follows:

1. That the City offer for sale without rights to underground water, any property not needed by the Board for its operating program, to private individuals for residential or business use. Prices were to be set that would be fair to the City as well as to property owners. The purpose would be to attract new residents and to encourage present residents to invest in homes and businesses in the area.

2. That the City fix the maximum water demands made upon the Owens Valley and to agree to return to towns and agricultural lands the right to use water originating in the Owens Valley which are in excess of the maximum amounts agreed upon. This would give security to those who wished to restore cultivation to their lands, knowing they have a secure water supply.

3. That the City, which already owns a large percentage of the lands in each of the Owens Valley towns, cooperate with the towns in community development, for example, street lighting facilities in Independence and adequate and safe water distributing facilities in Lone Pine.

4. That the City adjust its rentals on businesses and homes to be more in line with the depreciation of values and the earning capacity of the business houses and present conditions of residences.

5 Since the City of Los Angeles and its residents enjoy the vacation

resources of Owens Valley and obtain profitable income from the sale of merchandise related to hunting and fishing, therefore the City should lease available lands to the State Fish and Game Commission for the propagation of fish and game.

6. That the City appoint a Standing Committee of the Board of Water and Power to work in cooperation with a similar committee appointed by the Inyo Associates.[86]

These points were presented to the Board of Water and Power in a friendly and cooperative spirit. The results would benefit both the City and Owens Valley.

At the meeting of the Associates it was estimated that it might take up to three years to reach full accomplishment of the above goals. They were encouraged by some signs that the City was already beginning to cooperate. Electric power rates were being reviewed, reappraisals were being conducted and some adjustments were being made to rentals.

An editorial in the *Inyo Independent* on March 20, 1936 states: "The Valley has done more than its share in seeking an understanding basis upon which a new leaf might be turned in the unfortunate volume of City–Valley relationships. The right hand of fellowship and accord was extended to the board and it was ignored (referring to the Lone Pine water suit). The next move in any cooperative program rests with the commissioners. Theirs is the opportunity to join with the valley in a just and fair program. Ultimate recognition must and will come of the right of the people in the Owens Valley to live." [87]

At a subsequent meeting of the Inyo Associates, Ralph Merritt reported that the Valley's program had been presented to the Board of Water and Power and acknowledged. The Associates voted to appoint a permanent committee to deal with the City including representatives from Bishop, Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine, the chairman of the Associates and Ralph Merritt.

In May two Los Angeles Councilmen attended a meeting of the Associates–Councilman Baumgartner and Councilman Steve Cunningham. Councilman Baumgartner stated that in 20 years he had never met a body in Owens Valley like this. He said that Los Angeles would benefit by a friendly policy but that he did not believe that Los Angeles should ever sell back any land. He favored leasing land for town development, and opposed leasing lands for agriculture lest in dry years there not be sufficient water. Councilman Cunningham, a good friend of Ralph Merritt, tried to work with the Inyo Associates and listen to their requests, although not always able to persuade other members of the Coun-

cil or the Board of Water and Power to do the same. At this same meeting, Father Crowley put in a plea for the urgent need of some remedy for the Lone Pine water situation which presented both a health hazard and a fire danger.

The Inyo Associates reviewed accomplishments made in the less than eight months of its existence, prior to its recess from June to September. They had obtained greater appropriations for road improvements, especially for the Death Valley–Mt. Whitney Highway; Death Valley boundary matters had been discussed; cooperation had been given to the sportsmen's clubs for conservation of fish and game resources in the High Sierra; historical sites had been identified and recommendations made to preserve them; publicity was organized and presented on various public events to encourage tourism; and excellent work had been done in building a foundation for a new era of cooperation with the City of Los Angeles. Much work lay ahead and the members continued their commitment and determination to bring hope back to the people of Owens Valley.

In March 1938 Father Crowley was elected president of the Inyo Associates, Will Chalfant as vice president, and M.L. Harbach as secretary. The various committees continued to do their work quite successfully. The Committee on Relations with the City of Los Angeles continued with Ralph Merritt as chairman, and Will Chalfant, W.R. McCarthy, George Savage and Father Crowley as members. A few months later W.R. McCarthy, the first president of Inyo Associates died.

As incoming president, Father Crowley outlined their tasks for the year and pointed out that Committee chairmen would be expected to report for themselves on activities of their committees, as far as possible. The reports of these committees at meetings when guests from Los Angeles were present were so well prepared and showed such energetic action that the image of the Associates was considerably enhanced. Publicity steps should be organized for greater efficiency and Committees were expected to meet at least monthly, and he promised to meet with them whenever possible. A guest at the meeting was County Supervisor, John Lubken, who "emphasized the desire of the Board to manage for the best interests of the County, and its willingness to hear at any time any matters that the Associates or others may desire to bring to its attention. It often happens that the Board is guided by information that is not generally known." [88] Apparently the County Supervisors had at last come around to realizing that the Inyo Associates were a source of progress for the Owens Valley, but at the same time they were

jealously guarding their authority.

The fact that Los Angeles now owned so much property in Owens Valley that did not provide any return on their investment, coupled with high taxes on unproductive land, was a cause of concern to the economy-minded citizens of Los Angeles. In response to frequent requests by the Inyo Associates, Tom R. Silvius, an attorney, was appointed as the City's district agent in Owens Valley. He was authorized to speak on behalf of the City and the Board of Water and Power. He came to be a valuable friend, although at times political realities prevented him from taking a stronger stand in favor of Owens Valley. Another advocate was Watt Moreland, Chairman of the Land Committee of the Board of Water and Power.

A series of consultations followed between Ralph Merritt and Father Crowley, both verbal and written. In early July 1938, Ralph Merritt was able to obtain a "stolen" copy of the recommendations of a report to the Board of Water and Power. He had lunch in Los Angeles with Steve Cunningham and Watt Moreland who apparently shared the document. In a letter to Father Crowley, Merritt wrote that he had asked them two questions: "'Does the City intend to purchase any further properties in the Owens Valley and does the City intend to sell lands within the limits of the four towns of the Owens Valley?' Mr. Moreland replied definitely 'No' to the first question and definitely 'Yes' to the second question. He said he would arrange that these answers could be made public at an early date."[89] Of course these answers meant that the purchase of the Bishop Pool was definitely not to be, but that there was great hope that the town residents would be able to purchase back their lands without water rights. Father Crowley was asked to read it and "return it to me with the understanding that you have never seen it, and that no one else knows anything about it through you. Please give me your comments."[90] Father Crowley's answer consisted of nine handwritten pages of his obviously careful study of all the points in the report. That the Padre was an able politician and not above using even a "stolen" report to help realize the goals of the Inyo Associates in their struggle for the rights of the citizens of Owens Valley, is demonstrated in the following letter:

"The program is a little stunning coming as it does at the end of such a tough pull. It is like finding the lake around the bend instead of two miles further up. So for that, at least, fervent thanks to God, and a proper mead for all responsible for this advance. To yourself a lion's share.

"Now, we, and that means you and I, are in a little bit of a fix on this secrecy. I realize perfectly that a 'stolen' report cannot be made the

object of a session of the 'Relations with Los Angeles Committee'. The danger to both sides is too great. But, apparently, or am I wrong? –your O.K. of this draft is going to be used by Moreland et al as the approval of Owens Valley. And that is bad. For even though you, or we, eliminate all that strikes us as inimical to the Associates program, we can err. And even if we do not err, we must bear the brunt of all future criticism of the workings of the plan. We shall be the boys 'who sold out Owens Valley'. The Supervisors too should have a look at the scheme before it is launched, as they are the elected officers of both the tenants of the City and the rest of us. If the Supervisors are in no way consulted, and it ever appears that we gave any sort of a nod towards the program ere they heard about it, that will be the end of us and the Associates.

"Now perhaps all these have occurred to you, and your thought and Moreland's is to keep our part in the preparation, or revision, secret, and then to allow the program to be launched as the Board's solution, which is to come as a big surprise to all of us, Associates, Supervisors et al. If that is the arrangement, I see no difficulty, but we must not allow anyone in that case to even hint that we approved it secretly first. If the Associates go on record afterwards as approving it, O.K. By that time they will have felt the pulse of the Valley and will have sensed the Supervisors' stand. And Ralph, as I hope to point out later, the latter is very important at this juncture.

"Now, for your recommendations. (H) In re the elk. The correction you make is good, as we do not wish to lose them, and Phillips [James E. Phillips, Engineer, Aqueduct Division, LADWP] himself stated at the meeting for that purpose that the City did not want to lease for agricultural purposes the area involved, as it had ample and better land elsewhere. The 'east side of the highway' was my suggestion as a compromise that day, and I know it meets with the Fish and Game Commission approval, though not with Boothe's [Forest Service Supervisor] although he said he would accept it.

"(A) You do not mention this, but if the City is going to 'set aside for *permanent* irrigation 1800 acres of land' why cannot the City *sell* that land? This would help enormously in encouraging a few, or many, permanent settlers. It might even serve, and this I am definitely for, as a resettlement colony, on the basis of five or ten more acres, with government aid.

"(G) I wonder whether, in face of Moreland's expressed opposition to buying, it would be well to include this Bishop purchase business? A few days ago you wrote that Joe Riley and others would have a chance to

sell anyway if the market was created, and the setting of a price might involve a lot of complications. However, you are closer to the pulse than I am, so if you think the City will accept that amendment, fine–but I do not care to risk all the rest for that item.

"*But* I am strong for the remainder of your suggestion on that point, the sale of other City lands in the towns. That, as Chalfant asserted recently, is the greatest immediate need, whether its solution involves purchase of the 'Bishop Pool' or not.

"F) I am for your correction. This paragraph contains the real dynamite, as it manifests a desire to run the show, regardless. You know how we discussed a T.V.A. authority etc, as a solution, but all our talk was based upon the ownership of property, not upon population. And while the City owns some 75% of the lands, she owns *none* of the people. So that even her tenants are not her citizens, and she has no more right to dictate to the citizens of Inyo than the American Sugar Co. has to govern the Filipinos because they have investments there, or in Hawaii. The City cannot 'realize a safer and more direct control' until either she owns *all* of Inyo County (not merely the Valley) or she succeeds in annexing the Valley to the City, or she presents to and wins the consent of, the people of Inyo County a legal form of government which will safeguard her rights. In short, mere ownership of land does not entitle her to dictate to the rest of us who are still under County or city government. She can activate us, perhaps, but that activating must be done *here*, and not in Los Angeles. The consent of the governed is essential in this instance, for we can, and I personally will, battle any attempt at overlordship based on grounds of bugaboo of taxation. The right to tax is the right to govern, and if, as it would appear, the City is trying to get all possible taxing agencies out of the way she has to (a) provide instead an orderly form of government which can provide for the possession of homes, peace and happiness (b) assure, either under a new form or the present form of government, that City-owned properties shall be taxed at the same rate that competitive properties are taxed.

"If the plan (F) goes through, and the City does not dispose of *all* its town lots it can, and will, erect and lease buildings for stores and hotels and rent them at a cheaper rate than a private property owner in the same town can do, because municipalities are tax-exempt on improvements. Pursuit of this policy would inevitably drive the private owner out of business, as he would have to bear *all* taxes save those on vacant land, and he would have to *buy* light, sewer and water connections, and perhaps fire protection, from L.A. which would furnish all these either

free or at minimal cost to its own tenants.

"Again, Charlie Brown, in a *confidential* chat the other day, in which I told him the Associates' stand on any candidate, told me he was for protecting the City's rights, but he was dead set against any form of Commission government for the Valley, as he thought it a violation of the right of franchise. This from a clear sky, as I had not mentioned any such plan. And remember, Charlie is likely to be elected Senator.

"Also, how does the present tax suit or suits, and that being contemplated in Mono County (a tip) fit into this program? Does the City wish to battle the Supervisors forever? Does it wish to decrease the assessment and boost the Valley simultaneously? Does it expect the Supervisors, or whatever authority there may be at that time, to *raise* the valuation of the 1800 acres permanently set aside, with water, or of the 13,000 acres temporarily set aside, with water, because there is water on them? If they are valueless now, as the City asserts in its suit, what will make them valuable then, and (#22) 'total net revenue will be materially increased in comparison to present income.' Income to whom? The City alone? What about the County?

"In short, I am trying to show what you have hinted at, that the policy of (F) is unfair, tyrannical and illogical. Property has its rights, but *all* property has the same right. Hence any form of government must be representative of the owners and tenants of *all* property in any given area, and 'direct control' must rest in the hands of the people.

"I think you can grasp now my reference to the Supervisors at the beginning. I have personal assurance that they are now sympathetic towards the Associates. Also, I told them in private conference of Mullen's [Chairman of the Board of Water and Power] tender to me. And in return I have been told that they dare not, because (a) of the publicity involved, both before the public and their attorneys, even suggest a compromise and (b) because they feel sure they are going to win,–they dare not ask me to follow up Mullen's hint, but they would secretly be very happy if I could come with any offer from the City of a real permanent solution.

"I may have rambled a bit, but I hope you catch my viewpoint. The program is splendid, except in the points you mention. And I believe that if they will change (F) to read as you say, even leaving all discussion of 'political subdivision setup' to be discussed by a secret or public commission from the Supervisors, the City and the Associates later, they will avoid a dangerous shoal.

"Also, *no* announcement of leasing, etc, will be any good without a

statement of sale of lands *simultaneously*.

"Finally,the tax suit is a black eye, and contradicts their program. Tell Moreland or Scattergood that Inyo and its Supervisors will believe their outstretched hands when they call off their legal dogs. *Candor* is absolutely essential, if only with a few of us. And *history* is still against them, for programs have been drawn up before. Why spoil the chance of leaving questions such as the tax suit unanswered (they are prolonging the time deliberately, I understand). And a little round table discussion, with frankness, of this government and tax problem, would enable us to settle these questions even before the publication of the program.

"*Entre nous*, (French for between Ralph and myself) a great light came to me after I had read the program. The folks up here are bothering me about what this year's celebration will feature. I told them I could not think of anything. *But*, why could it not, as a county-wide affair, commemorate the burying of the axe, the smoking of the pipe of peace between Inyo and Los Angeles? What a pageant! What a headline for the nation! What an ad for Los Angeles! What joy for us!

"But I cannot tackle it, and will not, until we lay the specter at the board, this tax business and possibly the governing system. Please keep this in mind, as I feel that it is too good a chance to miss.

"Quote me if you will, and assure them that no other soul knows it. And tell them I am praying that they can come all the way, and that when they do John J. Crowley, Inyo's Padre will take the stump for L.A. in the biggest show on earth.

"God bless you. Padre."[91]

Ralph Merritt shared Father Crowley's suggestions with Cunningham and Moreland with a few more of his own. He wrote on July 19, 1938: "I think one of the most important things is to have the City definitely state its position on the purchase of the land in Bishop, because a number of important people are led to believe that Riley may be put under control of the City by having the purchase matter dragged along so that the City could always 'crack the whip' over him. Mr. Moreland does not want to do this, and I think we will have some definite reply on all matters very quickly."[92] Father Crowley responded in a letter date July 21, 1938:

"Yes, your brief to Moreland was splendid, in toto. You incorporated therein all of the few points I made, but much more adroitly. And your own adherence to the original Associates' program was refreshing, and, I feel, in the long run will be the program adopted. May God speed the entire performance now, so that we can clear the decks and draw a breath."[93]

A letter written to Ralph Merritt on August 6, 1938 adds another note in the considerations:

"Also, we have nowhere called attention to the deplorable loss the flooding of Owens Lake has caused both the soda plants and the town of Lone Pine. I understand now that both plants say they cannot open for two years. Would it be possible to insert a clause asking the City to be mindful of this danger in their future water distribution, or do you think the general program for irrigation and/or flooding will take care of that? Remember we promised Keep [Superintendent of the Natural Soda Products at Keeler] to take some action on that phase."[94] This was an issue close to the Padre's heart since so many of the Keeler workers were Catholics and their livelihood depended on the operation of the N.S.P.

In a letter dated August 15, 1938, after attending the Board of Equalization meeting Father Crowley wrote: "Hurrah for the progress on the program. Unfortunately, the City is messing things up psychologically, perhaps otherwise for any announcement at this time. At the Board of Equalization meeting in Sacramento they presented a lot of evidence in re various classes of land, and the Board ordered Inyo to answer these charges by August 20. This meant immediate engagement of new appraisers, who are now in the field here @ $50 a day, in addition to Brierly and McCarthy on the lawsuit. Further, the City now has Mott, a former nominee for the Board of Water and Power, on the Equalization Board, and they are working on Bandoni (is that the name?) All this Lubken [Inyo County Supervisor] told me yesterday, and also that one of the big reasons the Supervisors did not want to aid a united publicity program now was that they could not even set the tax rate until September because the City has them jumping about like a cat on a griddle.

"I asked John[Lubken] if it would not be possible to postpone the Board of Equalization decision on the ground that it might prejudice the lawsuit, but he stated that the suit would be a long time coming to trial and the tax rate must be set at once. So you can see what a background the announcement of the program will have if the public knows that both the lawsuits and the suspended publicity program are due to the City of L.A., which now 'offers' a program!

"Your talk about Scattergood's spat with the Board gives me a slant on Mullen's request of me. I recall that he indicated that the Board was willing to drop or compromise, the lawsuit, yet he asked me to see Scattergood in re the lawsuit. Could it be that S. was the one who wanted to push the suit, possibly because it might embarrass Van Norman, and

that the Board wanted it dropped? Remember Tom Silvius was called to L.A. by Scattergood and told that he should not speak against the wisdom of bringing the suit. He told me this himself.

"Lubken suggests I again appear before the Board and salvage at least a blessing for the plan [publicity for Inyo-Mono]. Mono appropriated $700, all we asked."[95]

Following details of their efforts to get money for needed roads and a request for a young college student who needed a job to pay for her room and board at Berkeley, he closed with:

"Well, this letter, as usual has developed into a lot of requests for help, Yet you have at times thought you were of little use to anybody. God forbid! Keep battling. As ever, in Christ. Padre."[96]

Scattergood was a thorn in the side of the City of Los Angeles, having been elected to the Board and removed several times.

All of the above concerns were soon coming to a head in the planning for the September meeting of the Inyo Associates. The City of Los Angeles, the Board of Water and Power, and the Inyo County Supervisors were all invited to the meeting which was very carefully orchestrated by Ralph Merritt and Father Crowley. In a letter to Father Crowley Ralph Merritt wrote:

"As to the plans of the program for the meeting of Inyo Associates, it seems to me that this is one time when we should put on a real show, to impress the scope of the constructive work done by the Associates and the character and effectiveness of the men who make up its membership. As I remember it, this is about the last meeting of the present administration. If every Committee Chairman had a carefully prepared review of the work of the past year and a program to suggest for the consideration of the Committee which would take office for the succeeding year, it would be impressive to both the Commissioners and the visitors. If this is done, it is going to be necessary that you should check up with every Chairman and see that he really has something to say, and that the program does not fall down for lack of preparation.The closing Committee Report could then be on Relations with the City of Los Angeles.

"Of course it looks as though the City was creating a bad background for the suggestion of a constructive program. However, it may be that the very things that you mention are valuable in that they make it possible for us to cite them and to question the Commissioners regarding them. The City is not a single administrative unit, carrying on a coordinated program. It is more than a three-ring circus, and includes a lot of

side shows and camp followers.

"It is altogether probable that the Commissioners may be very sincere in carrying out a constructive policy program, while at the same time their legal department and various managers may at the present be vigorously active in a series of destructive programs, based on self interest and internal friction. If the larger constructive program can be adopted, the 'snipers' can be controlled."[97]

In a letter to his friend, Steve Cunningham, he shared a copy of Father Crowley's letter of August 15, detailing the matter of the Board of Equalization and the problems with Scattergood. He added:

"Both you and the Commissioners can feel sure if you come we will tactfully handle any controversial matters, and that if any particular subjects are to be ruled out, I will make it a point to see that they are not brought out, if I know in advance what they are.

"It would seem to me a fine plan if the Commissioners would accept the invitation to a picnic at Whitney Portal on Sunday the 11th. This would give them an informal opportunity to circulate among a lot of leading people and talk as freely as they choose, and as only one can talk under the trees and out from the pressure of office and business. At the meeting of the Inyo Associates, the members of the Board of Supervisors would also be guests. Does all this seem to be in order, and a plan that would make for mutual helpfulness?"[98]

Ralph Merritt wrote Father Crowley again on August 22: "There will be need, of course, for a little teamwork between ourselves. It may be much the best plan for you to handle the entire discussion, in order to satisfy the local boys. I will be glad to fit in wherever and whenever you think best. The fact that the Commissioners are coming and that Moreland is prepared to approach the discussion along the lines we have hoped for is about all the real contribution I have to make. You will note that Van Norman is coming but not Scattergood. The breach between the Board and Scattergood is widening. How this may effect Tom Silvius, I do not know, but it at least should give him some greater courage than he has shown in the past in his desire to comply with all of the ideas of Scattergood.

"I think it would be fine if you would immediately get in touch with Tom and check over all the details, to see that every possible assistance is given him and that he is in full accord with the Wednesday night meeting idea."[99]

As it turned out the meeting was scheduled to accommodate the City representatives on September 7, 1938 with three Commissioners

present–Moreland, Schumacher, Howell and the Board Engineer, Van Norman.

Father Crowley wrote to Ralph Merritt on August 24th : "Saw Phillips and Tom Silvius together and Tom alone. Tom feels that he has been left out by the Water crowd and says (absolutely confidentially) that Scattergood told him Van Norman's interest in selling lands up here is purely and simply to scare up some money to proceed with the Mono Project. Tom feels that not over $50,000 would be raised by sales here for a long while and he is discouraged. Both Phillips and he do not think there will be any revelation of program at this meeting, but they confess their ignorance. From Phillips' conversation Van Norman planned the trip and controls the Board.

"I imagine these notes confirm your reactions down there. Phillips agreed to tell Van of our invitation, and thought it would fit in quite well. I shall invite the Supervisors, if the bid is accepted by the Commission. The dinner will be in our hall, the first event in the new quarters.

"Pass along any developments and any ideas as to procedure. I am praying for you, but I need a lot myself. The financial pressure is a little heavy at the moment, but I am counting on Little Therese."[100]

The meeting was held with Father Crowley presiding and giving the welcoming address, followed by the committee reports and then Ralph Merritt spoke frankly, but courteously, of the demands of the Inyo Associates. He began by complimenting the City Commissioners on having a local district agent, but they wished to have one spokesman who would speak clearly for the Board on all matters to the people of Inyo and Mono. This would allow for better relations and mutual understanding. He asked them to outline the policy of the Board with reference to the use of surplus water and to the sale of lands for business purposes and for homes in the four towns of the Valley. He then gave an impassioned plea for the right of the residents of Owens Valley to self government, dropping a hint about possible fascist policies if they were not given their American freedom to govern themselves. He referred also to the ongoing tax suit that he hoped would be dropped. In a plea for cooperation he offered a challenge: "We extend both hands wide open, not only in welcome, but ready to grasp a shovel with which we are prepared to dig a grave–a grave as deep as you may ask to have it dug, in which we are prepared to bury for all time, the bitterness and the disappointments of the past. We are prepared to dig this grave and to bury all those things that have raised a barrier between us, provided you, on your part,

will build to that grave a highway which will not be paved with good intentions, but a highway that will be paved with clear, definite, dependable, constructive policies created to protect your high trust on behalf of the people of Los Angeles, created also in the spirit of equity, fairness, and justice toward the people of Inyo."[101]

Watt Moreland gave a speech describing the amounts of money that had already been invested in Owens Valley by the City and the desire of the City for cordial relations with the residents of the Valley and consideration of their present requirements. "We think you should be free to buy and own your property, and to develop your communities the same as citizens of every other American community is free to do. Furthermore, we would like to get our money out of it, and not be burdened with the management of the properties."[102] He agreed that the City should sell off its properties, residence and business and vacant lots, reserving its water rights but allocating sufficient water for domestic use. No mention was made of selling agricultural lands. He made it clear also that no lands would be purchased by the City, thus putting to rest the issue of the purchase of the "Bishop pool." The City did not have the money for that unless lands were absolutely needed to guarantee the present water supply. The other commissioners and Mr. Van Norman added their assurances of a wish to do everything reasonable to advance Valley welfare. The keynote on both sides was to put the past into oblivion and start out anew for the mutual benefit of both.

A week later a relieved Father Crowley wrote to Ralph Merritt: "Yes, it was a great meeting! And on all sides the echoes ring 'how fortunate there was such a group as the Inyo Associates to greet the Commissioners, and how fortunate the Associates met them first!'...Schumacher said that *you* and I are the men upon whom the Board will depend to keep the radicals in line and put the program over up here. He said the greatest danger he saw was that some up here would expect the moon, which the Board could not give. For instance, immediate sale of *all* property, without regard for neighboring values, and total disregard of existing leases. He said the sale plan would be worked out on a 10 year basis. More, there would be no further purchases. Also he said we would have practically immediate action on part of the program, certainly within the month.

"'Ralph is a very valuable man' was his comment. 'And your friend Steve Cunningham has helped you a lot.' Of course that too was Ralph's doing, so the Padre passes the laurels to where they belong, and thanks God through the Little Flower that you were able to be here to taste the wine of the

grapes which you have trampled, oh these many moons! God bless you for it all, and keep you."[103]

Ralph Merritt did a follow-up on the meeting by writing a letter to Mr. Mullen, Chairman of the Board of Water and Power, who had been unable to attend, reiterating the points made at the meeting. He enclosed a copy of the *Inyo Independent* and said that "the meeting was greatly appreciated by the people of Inyo, and your absence was a matter of regret to all of us."[104]

The results of all the careful planning that had gone into the meeting with the City representatives paid off in very short order. Less than a month later the Board took action on several points: they dismissed the infamous tax suit that protested assessments, and agreed to sell land the City owned to business and town residents, reserving the water rights and selling at reasonable market value.

Shortly after this meeting Fletcher Bowron was installed as Mayor of the City of Los Angeles, after a recall election of Mr. Frank Shaw. Father Crowley took this opportunity to write Mayor Bowron and assure him of the cooperation and good will of the citizens of Owens Valley. He included a note: "If you know, and a perusal of your public career evidence that you should know, the saga of 'How Los Angeles Got Its Water' you will remember that the prevailing theme has not been mutual love and forbearance. Previous administrations and Commissioners have essayed, or refused to recognize the problems, attitudes alike productive of further misunderstanding, bitterness and bad publicity. It should console you as you assume the burden of Mayoralty to know that you need have no fear for Owens Valley, that here at least a big job has been squarely tackled and well done.

"The enclosed clipping from the *Inyo Register* edited by Mr. Will Chalfant, author of *The Story of Inyo*, who has lived through the turbulence of the past three decades, expresses a thought that is abroad in the county today. He says truly that 'Owens Valley had educated one lot of Commissioners after the other only to have some local Los Angeles issue displace them,' and 'although Mr. Shaw has not been of any help to us, he selected practical and sincere Commissioners.'

"May I suggest to your Honor, on behalf of the people of Inyo, who have come to trust the present 'practical and sincere Commissioners,' that any radical change in the present personnel of the Board of Water and Power might endanger the entire program of rehabilitation, and destroy the mutual confidence now existing? Life is too short for us to begin 'educating' another group of men, no matter how capable. Be-

lieve me when I say that the practically simultaneous announcements of this peace pact and of your taking office have put Inyo flatly behind your administration. I trust that nothing will jar the picture out of focus.

"With sincere good wishes for an equitable and forward looking administration, I am Sincerely yours, John. J. Crowley, Chairman, Inyo Associates."[105]

Father Crowley, in his role of Inyokel, offered this summary for the general public:

> *October 9, 1938.* The same day that four men in Munich signed a momentous piece of paper, deciding the fate of millions, four men in the city of Los Angeles attached their signatures to a document that spells the end of civil strife for a large part of California. On that day the Commissioners of Water and Power agreed to cancel all existing lawsuits against Inyo County, to bind themselves never to interfere with the local self-government of the towns in Owens Valley, and to offer for sale, now and henceforth, lots owned by Los Angeles in Lone Pine, Independence, Big Pine and Bishop. Thus, the page begins to turn upon a tragedy hardly paralleled in America, save possibly in the seizure of Indian lands so vividly pictured in *Ramona*. Only those who had lived through a few decades of Ireland's absentee landlordism could have felt at home in Owens Valley in the past quarter century. Eighty per cent of the land in town and country was owned by the City, which refused to lease arable areas, would not build new structures upon town lots or make major repairs on existing buildings, controlled electric light, water, and sewer systems; dictated how many service stations, auto camps, or grocery stores might serve each community, and finally attempted to coerce the only incorporated town into disincorporating, on the promise of "a more unified and direct control." As Ralph P. Merritt eloquently phrased it in his address to the commissioners on their recent fact-finding visit: "If this isn't Fascism, what is?"
>
> How these things came to pass is a long story, and not a pretty one. The facts that are beyond controversy are that early in the century certain engineers in Los Angeles looked long and thirstily upon the waste waters of Owens Valley, then a remote region reached by a narrow-gauge railroad and two ruts in the sand, and that they planned with a few influential citizens to build an aqueduct. People in the Valley heard of great stock farms about to be installed, for which they had been selling options on their river-front ranches, and of a vast reclamation district, evidenced by the presence of a government engineer. But one day they discovered that they had sold their birthright, literally down the river, that the government engineer had entered the employ of "The City," and that the waters of Owens River were to be borne 250 miles to convert the dollar-an-acre sagebrush land of the San Fernando Valley into orange orchards and real estate subdivisions. Legal

battle availed naught–what could a handful of farmers do against the Angels? So they accepted the situation as a hard fact, for there was still much water available, and many had retained their holdings. Nor did the City express any desire for further water, so sure were the engineers of an ample supply. So sure in fact that they battled about the advisability of building a storage reservoir in Long Valley to hold back the surplus in years of heavy snow, finally deciding that it would not be necessary. But they erred, and when Los Angeles continued to outgrow one suit after another the original tactics were re-employed. Secretly controlling options were obtained on the remaining water-bearing lands, and panic broke loose when the truth became known. Those who would not sell at the City's prices found water being pumped from beneath their land by compressed air pumps on adjoining City property. The "checker-board purchase plan," we called it. Merchants and town residents faced bankruptcy, for no provision had been made for them. Floodgates were opened on the aqueduct; dynamite put Owens Valley in the nation's headlines; gunmen patrolled our streets.

Why does not the rest of California love Los Angeles? Whatever the reason, it was this antipathy of the "cow counties" and San Francisco to the Southern California metropolis that resulted in action by the state legislature "enabling" the City to buy the remaining agricultural lands and town properties, if the owners wished to sell. Where individuals wanted merely to dispose of their underground water rights, as in the towns, the City paid them 15 per cent of the value. Desperate, and dazzled by the prices, which were usually handsome, the owners of the aforementioned 80 per cent soon sold out and either departed for other climes or rented back their homes and became the prey of every automobile and mining-stock salesman this side of Mars. Water was withdrawn from the farms, orchards died, houses were either razed or sold for a song and moved to locations in the settled sections, and the sage and rabbit-brush took over Owens Valley.

But still Los Angeles grew. Boulder Dam was transferred from the engineer's drawing board to the Colorado, furnishing power that make Parker Dam and a huge aqueduct possible. Still a hundred miles north of us the City reached and bought–and how those ranchers made them pay–the waters that fed Mono Lake, and an 11-mile tunnel was begun to lead those streams into the Owens River watershed, where at last the Long Valley Dam had been started. Federal aid highways found Owens Valley, and over them came tourists by the hundreds of thousands, and new blood for the towns. Level-headed residents took stock, granted the needs and the rights of Los Angeles, and began a campaign to convince the powers that it would be impossible to serve the mountain-minded vacationers from the metropolis unless adequate accommodations could be provided for them in the Valley, and enough water leased or sold to certain acreages surrounding the towns to provide dairy, fruit, and truck farms. This water, they pointed out, would

now be available from the combined sources of Owens and Mono basins, with the copious supply from the Colorado in reserve. Fortunately, time marched on in Los Angeles, too. Death removed the original actors from the stage, and, as in Owens Valley, there came some who were willing to bury the past and work out a common future together. Hence the announcement from the Board last week. For this, and other blessings to come, Inyokel is truly grateful. So are all who love Inyo, and who have longed to see again the day when we can watch the storms on Whitney through the vines that frame our door, rather than through the ghostly arms of a long-dead poplar. It is a joy to tell the world that the old quip is no longer true, that "Owens Valley is dry, because Los Angeles is all wet."

For his part Ralph Merritt wrote a letter to the editor of the *Central California Register* which bears the headline "Non-Catholic Lauds Priest for Work in Inyo County":

"Independence, Calif. Oct 7, 1938

"Dear Sir,

"Like many other Inyoites, I am an enthusiastic reader of 'Sage and Tumbleweed,' whose author brings to all your readers the charm and human values of the deserts and mountains of Eastern California. That column this week [he never lets on that he knows that Inyokel is his friend and colleague, Father Crowley] carries the news of the 'Peace Pact of Inyo,' which has just been entered into by Los Angeles and Inyo for the rehabilitation of Owens Valley and the rebuilding of the security and right of self-government of the people who live there.

"For some reason, no mention is made of a very important contribution to this unique event. As chairman of the Committee on Relations with the City of Los Angeles of Inyo Associates, I take this opportunity to speak of the contributions made by Father (Monsignor) J.J. Crowley of Lone Pine, who is the present chairman of Inyo Associates.

"Years ago in Fresno, when Father Crowley and I were both members of Rotary, alternating from year to year as speakers at the Christmas meeting of Rotary, a close friendship developed. Later, I went across the mountains to Inyo County in search of renewed health after the stress of Fresno days had taken its toll. I was glad to get back to the desert and mountains of Inyo, but the conditions of mind and of finances of the people were something shocking. People thought only in the past–the glory of mines that were now exhausted and the happiness of farming days before Los Angeles bought the water and made the valley a desert. But one day in Lone Pine I found my old friend, Father Crowley, who had returned to his old missionary parish to serve its people,

and for himself also to rebuild lost health. It was soon clear to the Padre that to create spiritual stability and growth there must be greater opportunity given the people for material stability and material growth. So the Padre and I joined with others to bring about a forward looking, happy and prosperous community. The result was the bringing together of 30 representative men in 'Inyo Associates' dedicated to constructive upbuilding of California east of the Sierras. The results of this work of three short years speak for themselves. Among the notable tasks now being completed is the new 'Peace Pact of Inyo.'

"Today people in this Valley look forward–not backward. The future is brighter than it ever has been. Everywhere men and women of all denominations or of no Church appreciate the great public service of Father Crowley in all of this. Catholics and non-Catholics attend church in pride of mutual accomplishments. What greater tribute could there be to any Church than that it has served mankind, as this Church and its priest have done? Without the leadership of Father Crowley, there would have been no peace pact–there would have been no return of community pride and progress.

"Because I have known these facts better than anyone else, I wanted, as one who is not a member of his Church, to pay tribute to the generous devotion of Father Crowley to the spiritual and material welfare of all the people of Inyo."[106]

In the same issue there appeared a very interesting "Guest Editorial" unsigned, but the author is none other than the Padre's old Fresno friend, Rev. Harry Clinch, who had just been ordained two years previously and was associate editor:

"We always like a story behind a story. More than 15 years ago a young Padre volunteered to take the missions of Inyo County. The sudden switch of policy on the part of the city of Los Angeles and the consequent departure of many of the Catholics and impoverishing of the communities led to a sad state of affairs for the missions of Inyo. In God's own way the Padre's plans were interrupted by a change to Fresno, the see city [headquarters] of the newly established diocese. There it was that he met Ralph Merritt, becoming friendly to the exchanging quips over the table at Rotary luncheons. Fate, however decreed a closer union between the two, and, when worries of depression brought ill health to both, the Padre obtained his Bishop's permission to return to Inyo, while Ralph was drawn to the same county by mining interests.

"A year later a pack mule trip into the high Sierras brought these two, and they were together for ten days. In those ten days a friendship be-

tween the two was consolidated, a friendship born of a mutual hope for the rehabilitation of Inyo County. Under the Sierra pines and by the evening campfire, witnessed only by the third member of the party, the twain pledged each other mutual support in seeking Inyo's future. Later Ralph Merritt became the head of Inyo Associates [actually of the Committee on Relations with the City of Los Angeles] and the letter which he wrote to the editor of the *Central California Register* is evidence of the success of that body's efforts to rehabilitate Inyo.

"And now a strange list of fate! For, in his effort to compliment the Padre of Inyo missions, Ralph Merritt never knew that his letter, in the absence of the editor, was to be received by the writer of this column, who, incidentally, was the third member of that fishing trip!"[107]

Not to be outdone, Inyokel responded:

> *October 23, 1938.* I quizzed the Padre about the puff he received in last week's *Register* from Ralph Merritt, and got the following riposte. "Regardless of what Ralph may say, I know that our program with Los Angeles would never have succeeded unless it had a great deal of Merritt, and that is Owens Valley's united belief. Ralph's letter, praising my poor help, reminds me of a story related by Archbishop Hanna. A grieving widow sat with her brood of orphans at the obsequies of her spouse and listened to the priest expound the virtues of the deceased. To hear him tell it the dead man had been an extraordinary provider, a lover of his family, a model of temperance. As the list grew the widow looked up from her handkerchief and nudged her oldest. 'Johnny, slip up there and look in the coffin and see if that's your father.'"

There were fewer references to the City and water problems after this. However a column in "Sage and Tumbleweed" mentioned Will Chalfant and the *Inyo Register*:

> *July 30, 1939.* Bill Chalfant says in his *Inyo Register* that this is the first time that the Board of Water and Power and the people of Owens Valley have worked in complete accord. He was referring to the delay in the sale of Owens Valley lands occasioned by the desire of Mayor Bowron to investigate the proposal personally, and showed that this postponement would not cause any serious inconvenience, since all parties were apparently agreed as to the fundamental worth of the plan. Bill's own visit to Los Angeles with District Attorney George Francis and the Padre and their appearance before the city council at the request of the Department of Water and Power to tell the people's story were the most concrete evidence of the new spirit abroad in the land. The valleyites pleaded for the Department's program before the council and secured a favorable vote. But because the sale requires a

new ordinance, which demands a second reading, the mayor requested a 30-day delay before the final vote is taken. The Padre thinks the picture of Councilman Steve Cunningham's carrying the Padre's handbag across the parking lot in Los Angeles, in which bag a CCC boy in Death Valley had stored the little Mass bell that morning, and which bell tinkled merrily as Steve walked ahead, followed by Ralph Merritt and the Inyo delegation, should find its way into the last chapter of the *Story of Inyo.* Los Angeles has at last accepted Inyo's burdens, and we are traveling along together. And Steve Cunningham, from his record with us, does not make a bad bellwether.

The Inyo Associates invited Mayor Bowron and some of the Councilmen to a meeting at Whitney Portal soon after and Inyokel reported:

August 13, 1939. "Why," demanded Councilman Hampton, as he spoke to the assembled Inyo Associates in the presence of Mayor Bowron and members of the city council and Water and Power Commissioners up at Whitney Portal last Friday night, "why should the people of Owens Valley desire any other roof than the starry sky in this inspiring temple?" "Because," whispered the Padre to the mayor as the first drops of a thundershower spattered on the speaker's head, "it leaks."

The "peace pact" attracted the attention of many journalists. Among them Ed Ainsworth of the *Los Angeles Times.* Inyokel commented on his article:

February 18, 1940. I asked the Padre what he thought about Ed Ainsworth's article in the *Los Angeles Times* magazine section of Jan. 28 asserting that "potatoes and the Padre and brotherly love," with a dam or so thrown in, were bringing back life to Owens Valley. He answered by pointing out George Savage's reprint of Bill Chalfant's editorial in the *Inyo Register* last week. Thus–"Not detracting in any degree from the credit due the Padre, the chief credit for improved relations with Los Angeles should be awarded to Ralph P. Merritt... It was he who proposed an organization to represent Owens Valley, he who suggested a committee on relations with Los Angeles, and he who headed that committee for two years, he who was a personal friend of Councilman Cunningham–who proved such a valuable aid–he, etc., etc." Set that down Inyokel, in your notes, and that Ed Ainsworth told me when I saw him in Los Angeles later that the composing room had dropped out 14 inches of type from his story–thus spoiling the continuity and the possible conclusions–and close with a fervent 'amen!' With Bill and George and all who knew the whole truth I aver that without Ralph Merritt's idealism, genius, experience, and devotion these things would never have come to pass."

Thus, did the modest Padre deflect any possible glory from himself.

By the beginning of 1940 notices were sent out by the Board of Water and Power that residents and businesses could apply to purchase lands from the Board at the present assessed prices. Some small farm lands would be leased with assurance of water rights, however major agricultural lands were excluded as they could not promise sufficient water supply over the years.

The City of Los Angeles had voted money for a dam and reservoir to be built on the old Eaton Ranch north of Bishop. This would collect water from streams in Mono County and hold them in reserve for when needed. It would also supply water for electric power at plants downstream. The subject of the Long Valley Dam had been discussed by William Mulholland and Fred Eaton back in 1905. Eaton had held out for a million dollars but the City would not pay that exorbitant price. In the end Eaton went bankrupt and the court sold the property to the City for $650,000. The day before Eaton died the City gained title to the land. However, delays were constant as it was not thought to be necessary for the City's water supply. But it was necessary for the residents of Inyo and Mono counties as it would assure them a water supply in years of drought. When at an earlier meeting of the Inyo Associates "attended by Van Norman, when Father Crowley, humorously but effectively ordered the room locked until Van Norman would okay building the Long Valley Dam. After some fuming, Van Norman yielded, 'We'll do it.' The Padre quiet as ever and with a smile said 'When?' Van stormed some more and then said, 'We'll start it–and finish it in say a year and a half–or whatever time it takes.' "[108]

As if the Padre did not have enough to do during that busy year of 1938, he met with other local residents from both Inyo and Mono counties in what originally was called the Inyo-Mono Recreational Conference to promote tourism in the area. The Conference consisted of ten representatives from each county, Father Crowley being elected temporary chairman. After several meetings and many roadblocks, they were able to obtain enough funds from local businesses and eventually from the Inyo and Mono County Supervisors to hire a full time promotion secretary. They selected Robert (Bob) Brown who had experience in various promotional and public relation positions as well as newspaper reporting. He was a fairly recent arrival in Owens Valley but was impressed by the enormous potential of the area. They decided to name the group the Inyo-Mono Associates. Bob Brown focused on publiciz-

ing winter sports especially in Mono County with Mammoth Lakes as the centerpiece, Mono Lake as a scenic wonder and, of course, the High Sierra, Yosemite National Park and Death Valley National Monument. He pointed out the great opportunities for fishing, hunting, boating, camping , hiking and packing into the mountains. He did not forget to include the role of the film industry in the Alabama Hills, definitely an attraction for the Angelenos. He invited leading tour companies, magazine and newspaper reporters, the Automobile Club of Southern California and others to discover these wonders for themselves.

In a few months the results were astounding. Death Valley hotels had to turn visitors away as the demand for rooms was so great. The story of the Mt.Whitney–Death Valley Highway dedication had also helped bring visitors to the area. The *Los Angeles Times* with the largest circulation of readers in California, published several prominent articles with excellent photos; *Westways*, the magazine of the Automobile Club of Southern California came in a close second with featured articles. In a few months Brown reported that the area had received over 3,021 column inches of newspaper clippings from 51 different newspapers in the state; 722 column inches of clippings from 12 magazines. He calculated that the total circulation of the newspapers added to about one million. As he stated to the *Inyo Register*: "Newspaper advertising in the big dailies costs from four to six dollars a column inch. Coast magazines charge from $50 to $200 per page for space. If you want to be surprised, get out your pencil and figure out how much this space is worth."[109] Of course, the advertising was all free to the Inyo-Mono Associates because the articles were considered newsworthy.

Through the efforts of Father Crowley and his colleagues some citizens were able to own their own homes and businesses. This development coupled with the increased business from the tourist industry gave the entire population of the two counties renewed hope and financial security. Service stations opened, new hotels and restaurants were added, stores stocked up on fishing and hunting gear, and a myriad of other tourist related services and goods found a booming market. By 1940 one million tourists a year were visiting the area, leaving about $5 million in trade. Some former residents who had left during the earlier years of the water controversy, returned to the Valley where they could now make a living.

16

LEGACY

During these busy years the Padre was dreaming about his own very special project–a memorial chapel to be built in Death Valley. The All Souls Memorial Chapel, designed at Father Crowley's request by the architectural firm of Spencer, Blanchard and Maher of San Francisco, was to be dedicated to all those who had lost their lives in Death Valley due to thirst, starvation, accidents or other causes, going back to the intrepid Death Valley '49ers to the more modern motorist whose car broke down far from help. He was even doing some historical research on the names of those to be remembered.

As part of the whole project he also included plans for a Way of the Cross, or fourteen stations or crosses starting at the Death Valley chapel near Furnace Creek, crossing the Panamint and Argus ranges, through Darwin and Keeler and ending at Whitney Portal, from "hell to heaven." With the approval of the Park Service, he was promised a small piece of land between Furnace Creek Inn and the CCC camp by the Pacific Coast Borax Company. The architect's plans showed a beautifully simple chapel to be made of native limestone and travertine marble from Death Valley itself. Contributions from all over the country began coming in and enthusiasm for the project was high. In a flyer he had printed for those wishing to make donations, he included the following note: "My donation is conditioned upon the gifts of others for the same purpose, and if enough funds are not assured within a reasonable time for the completion of the Chapel as herein planned, I give permission to the Roman Catholic Bishop of Monterey-Fresno to build as fitting an edifice as the contributions will permit, with the consent of the National Monument authorities."[110]

Another dream he had was to place old-time wagon wheels embedded in concrete to mark the various historic sites in Death Valley and Indian Wells Valley.

On his trip in the summer of 1939 to New York when Father Crowley was on the *Death Valley Days* radio program he included a pitch for the

Memorial Chapel. He wrote some of his columns describing this broadcast, other adventures and comments on the World's Fair. He was interviewed by several New York papers. In an interview with the *New York Sun* of August 19, 1939 he tried to find only good to say about New York. He praised the new parkways and bridges as "'something for which every New Yorker could be profoundly thankful.' When asked if he did not sometimes long for the cities and the opportunities they provide, he said: 'Only once in a while, when I read of a beautiful opera, a big concert, or some striking pageant. I should like to see those. But, of course radio helps offset that to some degree. I should also like a greater opportunity to meet people interested in literature, art, and things of that sort. Most of our folk are too hard-working or lack sufficient background for arts and letters. I have a taste for writing and do columning for our local newspapers, trying to preserve in print some of the unusual characters one comes across. But I am very happy where I am now–where all the relationships are sincere, where it is man to man in everything. I don't know that people are any more religious, but I do know that in all my years dealing with these men and women who still essentially are pioneers, I have never encountered an atheist.'"[111]

On his return he went with the Bories to visit Niagara Falls, the Finger Lakes, The Black Hills of South Dakota and other sights along the way. These he described in his columns with great enthusiasm.

Father Crowley was saddened in March of 1940 by the death of a very dear friend in San Francisco, Sister Anna whose father, Edward Chambers, had been the Vice-President of the Santa Fe Railroad and a wealthy man. He attended her funeral on March 16 in San Francisco, but before he left he took some time to write a beautiful eulogy about her life which was published in "Sage and Tumbleweed" the following week. He also left off with Father Clinch at the *Central California Register* office a recent photo of himself that he had taken saying : "You can have it in the files in case you need it."

He gave a ride to Fresno to friends he had known there–the Barnes family and their friend Hugh Burns, a state senator. From there he continued on alone with a stop at Bakersfield to pick up his dog, Tray, whom he had left in the care of the Sisters while he attended the funeral. Along the way he made a few stops to pass out small posters calling attention to the story of Steve Esteves, the stone mason of Death Valley, and the All Souls Memorial Chapel and Way of the Cross at 8:30 p.m. on Good Friday on the *Death Valley Days* program.

He had passed Mojave and was traveling up Highway 6 (now 14) just

before the turnoff to Walker Pass (Highway 178), on his way to say the Sunday 6:30 a.m. Mass at Death Valley. At about 3 a.m. a steer from unfenced rangeland apparently appeared suddenly in the road. He swerved to avoid it, but struck it and then was himself hit by an oncoming lumber truck. Father Crowley was killed instantly. The cause of death was reported as a fractured skull, possible broken neck and other injuries. His faithful dog Tray was thrown from the vehicle unhurt and was lying on the body of his master. One version claims that the Padre saved the dog's life when it fell on his lifeless body. Tray would allow no one near the body until the Padre's friend, well-known to Tray, Dr. Howard Dueker from Lone Pine arrived at the scene. He had been called to identify the body.

The truck driver notified authorities in Mojave who conducted an investigation. They were all shocked to find out the victim of the accident was the well-known Desert Padre. The truck driver was not cited for the unavoidable accident. Since the accident happened in Kern County, the inquest was done at Mojave and the body later transferred to the Albright Mortuary in Bishop. A reconstruction of the accident showed that the steer evidently was hidden by brush and jumped directly in front of the car. There was no chance for Father Crowley to avoid the animal, nor for the truck to avoid hitting Father Crowley's vehicle.

When the Kern County coroner had completed his official duties, the waiting coroner of Inyo County, Ed Blake, asked politely if he was finished. When he replied that he was, the Inyo coroner said sadly: "Then we'll take him home, he belongs to us. We belong to him. We'll take him home."[112]

In an interesting side note, the father of the young girl whom the Padre had visited in the Lone Pine Hospital the year before, had just passed Father Crowley speeding on his way up the highway and was one of the first to arrive at the scene.

Father Clinch received the message in Fresno and hurried to pray over the body of his one-time mentor and friend. It was Palm Sunday and also St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1940.

Parishioners in Lone Pine waited impatiently for the Padre to arrive in the Santa Rosa Church for the 9:30 a.m. Mass. After some time, someone entered the church and informed the waiting parishioners that the Padre had been killed in an accident on the way to Death Valley to say the 6:30 a.m. Mass. Needless to say, all were devastated.

The "Death Valley Rambler" reported in his column in the *Inyo*

Independent the following account: "Father Quilligan, until recently confined to St.Mary's[?] Hospital in San Diego, from illness, acting in a temporary capacity conducted Catholic services at Furnace Creek Inn... To his congregation Sunday morning, Father Quilligan related a pathetic incident connected with the passing of Father Crowley, and with their brotherly Christian association recently. He stated, that to put it one way, Father Crowley had selected his own successor to conduct religious services at Furnace Creek Inn on this day. This, because shortly prior to his death, Father Crowley had extended him an invitation to pay him a few months' visit in the Lone Pine and Death Valley districts for recuperation and recovery."[113]

When retold, this story led to the erroneous legend that Father Crowley's last dying words were to the truck driver to arrange for a priest substitute. All accounts point to the fact that Father Crowley was killed instantly and had no "last words." Later the Bishop appointed Father Quilligan as temporary pastor of Lone Pine until a permanent replacement was made in the person of Father Joseph Smith.

The body of Father Crowley lay in state all Monday afternoon and evening at the Santa Rosa Church in Lone Pine with a Rosary recited at 8 p.m. Father Harry Clinch relates how one mourner paid his respects to the Padre: "A desert-roughened lad, clearly a member of the local CCC unit, shuffled into Lone Pine's Santa Rosa Church, where resting in state were the remains of the 'Desert Padre.' Idly we watched this suntanned boy timidly enter the file of the Inyo fold, who one by one were scanning the stilled countenance of their Padre as though to see for themselves whether or not it was really true that he had been taken from them. The lad reached the Padre's side. Yes, it was the Padre. Of that the lad was now sure. His eyes widened, glazed in thought, and seemed to look far past the still form, enjoying again, perhaps, some associations with his Padre. Suddenly aware of the pressing group behind him awaiting their opportunity, the boy–after a tremendous sob shook his entire body–audibly clicked his heels, came to attention, and raised his hand in a smart salute, hiding eyes that were rendered unseeing by welling tears."[114]

Many had heard the news on Walter Winchell's Sunday evening news radio program: "one of the best known priests of the West" was his comment. Frank Pedneau says he heard it on the ten-person party line at Keeler. Word of mouth was all that was needed in Lone Pine, Independence, Bishop and Death Valley.

The memorial services were held on Tuesday morning at the tiny

Santa Rosa Church which did not hold more than 100 people. Chairs were borrowed from the elementary school, high school, Junior V.A. Club, Lions Club and the Protestant churches. Estimates of the number of mourners vary from 1,000 to 3,000 who lined up to pay their respect to the Padre. Mourners were outside the church and in the street which was blocked off to traffic for several hours.

The Requiem Mass was celebrated by Monsignor Phillip Kennedy, pastor of the Fresno Cathedral; the Padre's brother, Father Fred Crowley, assisted as deacon and the subdeacon was the youngest Crowley, George, who was a Jesuit seminarian at the time. Father Harry Clinch, his good friend and editor of the *Central California Register* was the master of ceremonies. The funeral oration was given by Monsignor Bernard Dolan of Long Beach, a longtime friend of Father Crowley. Among his words of tribute were: "You know his monument. It is not of granite or cement, but rests in the hearts of a devoted people. We live to mourn his loss and to appreciate and realize all that he has done." [115]

Many other priest friends from all over California came to mourn their brother-priest. The entire Board of Inyo County Supervisors attended, as did Wash Cahill from the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad in Death Valley, and officers of the CCC. The Inyokern CCC boys sent a spray they had fashioned from green pine branches with tiny yellow pine cones spelling out the initials of the United States Forest Service. The City of Los Angeles was officially represented by Watt Moreland, Chairman of the Board of Water and Power, and H.A. Van Norman, Chief Engineer of the Water Bureau, and Councilmen Steve Cunningham and John W. Baumgartner. Mayor Bowron of Los Angeles sent beautiful floral pieces which had been fashioned by the hands of employees from flowers raised with Owens Valley water at their Stone Canyon gardens. The people of Owens Valley sent a truckload of flowers with the inscription: "These flowers were not bought from a florist. We picked them ourselves at our homes because it was Inyo water that made them grow."[116] Some donated money to the All Souls Memorial Chapel which had been the Padre's dream. They hoped that his body would eventually be transferred there along with memorials of the pioneers of Death Valley.

The seven pall bearers were men from the Inyo Associates and the Inyo-Mono Associates. They were all non-Catholics and of these three were Masons. They were: George Savage, editor of the Inyo Independent; Captain C.N. Cadwell of the Death Valley CCC Camp; Dr.

Howard Dueker,his personal friend and tenant; Ralph Merritt, his very close friend; Slick (Mervyn) Bryant who later took over the leadership of the Inyo-Mono Associates; Walter Dow of the Lone Pine Dow Hotel; and Robert Brown, the Public Relations director for the Inyo-Mono Associates.

The Inyo newspapers' social columns listed numerous people who visited Owens Valley from all parts of California for the sole purpose of attending the memorial services. Among them were Helen Gunn of Independence; Jack Warner of the State Highways Department, Inyokern; Johnny Mills, the prospector who was the source of so many of Inyokel's mining stories; Dobe Gunnarson, a stone mason who had worked with Steve Esteves in Death Valley; Katherine Ronan who had offered hospitality to the Padre at Furnace Creek Inn where she was manager; and Ray Quirin who had assisted the Padre at Santa Rosa Church. The members of the Santa Rosa congregation along with Ralph Merritt assisted family members with the details of the service.

After the services, the funeral cortege of seven vehicles was escorted by Highway Patrol officer, Rollin Bell, to the Tehachapi Highway where the Kern County officers continued on to Hopson's Mortuary in Bakersfield where a Rosary was recited. The body was transferred to Fresno where an all-night vigil was held with prayers by the Knights of Columbus and the Young Men's Institute. In the morning the funeral was held in St. John's Cathedral in Fresno where the Padre had been pastor and chancellor for several years.

The solemn Requiem Mass was conducted by Bishop Phillip Scher, and numerous priests, sisters and lay people, Catholic and non-Catholic, attended the funeral services. His friend from seminary days, now Bishop Gorman of Reno, delivered the eulogy. Among his remarks: "Over in the deserts we have a saying that 'a man must measure up to last a year, because the desert rejects weaklings.' The desert did not reject John Crowley, because he was no weakling. Whether we consider him simply as a man with natural virtues or as a man of God with supernatural virtues, he measured up. Many a young man has gone forth to meet the difficulties of such a life as his, the spiritual and physical difficulties that he had to meet, and came home a wreck, spiritually and physically. But John Crowley was made of stern stuff. He is one of the truly great priests of our time...Often I drove through Owens Valley on my trips to and from Los Angeles. Often I did not meet Father Crowley, but I always made it a point to ask wherever I stopped, filling stations or restaurants: 'Do you know Father John Crowley?' And invariably I found a friend of his. The face would light up and some story of devotion or love

or sacrifice would be told that otherwise would never be known."[117]

After the funeral there was a guard of honor to accompany his body to his final resting place in the Fresno Catholic Cemetery of Holy Cross. This was where the Padre had asked to be buried–alongside his fellow-priests. A simple stone monument marks the grave with his name and dates of birth and death on the front and "Padre of the Desert" on the reverse. The date of his birth is given as 1892, but 1891 is the correct year.

Numerous articles announcing his passing appeared in local and national newspapers, including the *Los Angeles Times* and the *New York Times*. Kenneth Crist of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote: "Only two real blows has Inyo County ever had; one when it lost its land and water rights that metropolitan Los Angeles might expand, the other when it lost its Padre who, just recently, had led a successful campaign to allow the Inyo folk to buy back their property from the great city to the south."[118]

Letters to the editor of the *Inyo Independent* kept pouring in expressing their condolences to the friends of Father Crowley, who were legion. The City of Los Angeles and the Board of Water and Power passed a resolution honoring the one who had "taken a leading role in the furtherance of good relations between the people of Owens Valley and the people of Los Angeles, thus benefiting the communities of Inyo and Mono counties, the City of Los Angeles and the Department of Water and Power."[119]

The California Newspaper Publishers Association wrote: "He was a man–a man among men; with a handclasp that sparked fellowship and admiration; a smile that cemented friendship; a mind that probed for better things in the future, and a soul that glowed with the faith of which is the Kingdom of God."[120] The *Los Angeles Evening News* offered this tribute: "He possessed the happy faculty of combining business with pleasure, so that, although most of our contacts with the Padre were more or less in the line of business, we always felt as though he left us with a little of the graciousness that characterized his every gesture."[121]

Letters came with similar sentiments from members of the State Chamber of Commerce, the District Lions Club, the Automobile Club of Southern California and other civic organizations who had known the Padre in his many contacts advancing the cause of Inyo. Hollywood's Leo Carrillo, whom the Padre had written about in one of his "Sage and Tumbleweed" columns, wrote: "my heart is heavy with grief...a great soldier of God and a great man among men. The mountains he loved and the great deserts over which he sowed seeds of faith and kindness

will stand as monuments to his memory for all time. I thank God for such a friend."[122]

Even the editor of the *Inyo Independent*, George Savage, used his "Off the Beaten Path" column, rather than the editorial page to express his personal feelings. Among his thoughts: "There is something vacant in our heart as we sit down to the desk and type out the column for this week, for we have lost our friend and fellow-worker, a kindly soul with a heart as big as his parish...The Padre was a leader of men. He had the intestinal fortitude to stand for what he believed was right and in this he was an influence on all those about him. He wanted action above all else, and he wanted it to be rational and well conceived. His love of Inyo-Mono knew no bounds, for this was home to him...How strange that Father Crowley's untimely death should come as a result of a collision with a steer. Some four years ago he spoke before the Inyo Associates on the danger of highway travel through open range, and urged the signing and fencing of such highways. Who knows, perhaps this tragedy will hasten the work of protecting human life as it travels the highways of California. And in this campaign let us rededicate ourselves to preach the word that primary highways must be fenced. Unfortunately, a cow cannot read a sign."[123]

And then adding some news items: "When the body was escorted south from Lone Pine and the funeral cortege neared the new highway construction near Olancha, the Basich employees gave Father Crowley a touching tribute. Every equipment operator halted his truck, tractor or bulldozer, dismounted from his seat, and stood at attention with his head bared as the procession passed." Also: "Even Mother Nature paid her respect to the man who was soon to return to her bosom. Just before the procession crossed the Inyo County line, it passed through one of the most beautiful carpets of wild flowers we have ever seen. Every tiny bloom seemed to scintillate in the evening sun, turning its head toward the highway, as a gentle breeze bowed each flower in token of reverence." And in reference to the popular columns of "Sage and Tumbleweed" which were reprinted in the *Inyo Independent* he adds: "His kindly humor and his thoughtful counsel will be missed from our columns."[124]

His good friend and editor, Father Harry Clinch in the *Central California Register* wrote: "There's a terrific story in his death that he would love to be here to catch for you and bring you in the magic of his word pictures. Like the incidents of Masons crying like babies at the death of a Catholic priest; of a CCC enrollee a little on the unkempt side, not obviously sentimental, viewing his remains and then suddenly straight-

ening up, saluting his dead chaplain; or a Mexican child giving 21 cents for the Padre's memorial, and the husky undertaker who was going to take the Padre's body back from Bakersfield to Inyo, regardless of any and all objections, ecclesiastical or civil, because 'he belongs to us.' All of these he could catch in poignant detail; he would clothe them in a beautiful setting of Catholic doctrine or practice, and that would be Sage. And then how he could make fun of a terribly tragic incident like a cow's being responsible for his death. Imagine a member of the Papal household, he would probably say, with all his purple finery, being sent off to the terrible judgment seat of God by the highway trespassing of a wandering heifer. He'd probably make some devotional reference to 'forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.' And if the bovine beast belonged to some Protestant patriarch, he'd probably hold it up to derision provocative of loud guffaws, just to prove in a magnificent *reductio ad absurdum*, that he loved his Protestant friends as much as, if not better than, his Papist ones. And he'd probably call Ralph Merritt or George Savage of the *Inyo Independent* or Will Chalfant of the *Inyo Register* to testify to both of his suits–that Protestants and Catholic priests can mix, even if on the day he died the Palm and Shamrock didn't, and that the darned old cow should be put to death for manslaughter. And that would be Tumbleweed."[125]

He might even have added that not far from the site of the accident on the west side of the highway was a small canyon going off into the hills named "Cow Heaven Canyon." How much fun Inyokel could have had with that one!

His immediate family were stricken with grief. Father Fred had been ordained in 1934. He kept the Padre's dog Tray, who died about a year later. The baby of the family, George,who had always been a concern for his older brother, was still a Jesuit seminarian and was to be ordained the following year. Frank was Dean of Education at Fordham University in New York and had a growing family. Sister Petra was a nurse-administrator in Prescott, Arizona and Sister Paula was a nurse stationed in Modesto, California. Sister Josephine was with the Holy Family Sisters in San Francisco. His sister Nora, now Mrs. Elmer Hansen, had two young boys and was still living in Los Angeles. The "Headlight," as his sisters called their brother John, had passed on and Father Fred became the spokesperson for the family.

The *Worcester Evening Gazette* carried a front-page article with photo on the Padre's death and listed the numerous cousins still living in Worcester. The *Worcester Telegram* added a note that it was hoped the body

would be sent to Worcester for burial. It had been 22 years since he had left for the West, but they still considered him to be one of their own.

The news of his death reached Ruth Cornwall Woodman in New York. The *Death Valley Days* program scheduled for Good Friday in the West and Holy Saturday in the East, was to be about Steve Esteves, a story she had heard from Father Crowley himself. She promised to speak of the Padre and his plans for the All Souls Memorial Chapel in Death Valley and the National Way of the Cross from Death Valley to Mt. Whitney. Later she hoped she would be able to dedicate an entire program to the Padre of Death Valley.

David Bromley of Bishop wrote a poem, published in the *Inyo Independent*, entitled "Sage and Tumbleweed–'30'":

> The sage still sends its spicy breath
> The tumbleweed goes rolling on beneath the silver moon.
> The land that knew his kindly tread still lies unmarred by change;
> But he is gone from mortal sight o'er other hills to range.
>
> The dweller of his parish wide shall no more hear his voice,
> His merry quips shall no more ring and make our hearts rejoice.
> His car shall no more follow trails so dim they're scarcely seen;
> Nor questing lights that herald him shall bring one peace serene.
>
> His words that weekly from this space came humorous or grave,
> No more shall brighten tiring eyes and new hope bring the brave.
> The pine clad slopes shall miss his step, the desert skies shall weep;
> For he has gone to his reward and last eternal sleep.
>
> The day is done, the book is closed, goodbyes are said to friends;
> And at the bottom of the page the pen has writ, 'the end.'
> And when on Inyo County hills there breaks another dawn,
> The sage shall breathe its spicy breath and tumbleweeds roll on.[126]

A few weeks after the Padre's death the Inyokern CCC Company No. 3223 erected a cement cross with a three-tiered dais of native rock beside the highway where he had been killed. This cross was dedicated at a special ceremony attended by about 100 persons on the first anniversary of his death. The CCC officials presided and the speaker related that the CCC boys were from Tennessee, and were new to the Inyokern Company. None of them had the opportunity of knowing the

desert priest, but his spirit was so strong with the company that the boys admitted they did the work feeling it was done for a very personal friend. His friend, Father Harry Clinch, blessed the cross, and one of his long-time friends, Father Dan Meehan of Trona spoke on "The Meaning of Father Crowley's Life to Men of All Faiths." Ralph Merritt spoke briefly on the dedication of Father Crowley to the people of the region.

A year later an even larger group of about 400 attended another service arranged by Jack Warner at which Father Crowley's sisters and brothers were present. A musical trio of violin, cello and piano performances, vocal selections and a eulogy by Ralph Merritt added to the solemnity of the occasion.

For many years later a memorial service was held at the cross every Palm Sunday with priests from Inyokern and later Ridgecrest and the China Lake Naval Station presiding. The men of the Knights of Columbus in Ridgecrest named their group the "Father Crowley Council" in 1949 and since that time have been the custodians of the site. Unfortunately, vandals have destroyed the cross several times, but it has always been replaced, thanks to the loving work of the Knights of Columbus of Ridgecrest. The last cross was erected in 1992 and at this writing still stands. It can be seen on the east side of the highway just south of the west-bound junction of Highway 14 and 178. It faces west–to the same views that the Death Valley '49ers saw on their way out of their long journey, a story dear to the Padre's heart. It is marked on AAA maps.

Another honor soon came to the deceased Padre. The Hollywood Humane Society posthumously presented an award for his kindness to children and animals at a ceremony on April 14, 1940. Frank Scully, Hollywood writer and president of the group, introduced the actor Pat O'Brien who made the presentation to George Crowley. Father Fred Crowley who now owned Tray was unable to attend the ceremony because of a short notice. Old Cuff and Tray would have been proud of their master who had not despised their lowly status of mongrels whom no one wanted.

With the approval of the Crowley family, Ralph Merritt contracted with screen writer, Frank Scully, to write a story about the Padre's life. Harry Lashman and Maurice Cleary were to produce the motion picture. They agreed that the film would depict Father Crowley's character and activities in a dignified manner and in no way would offend the Catholic church. It was agreed upon that 50 percent of the net profits would go to the proposed All Souls Memorial Chapel. What became of this project is unknown. However, copies of the script seem to indicate

that the story was definitely a fictionalized biography. Other movie producers made tentative efforts at putting his life on the silver screen, but they never materialized.

The most enduring monument of all is the present Crowley Lake, some 25 miles north of Bishop east of Highway 395. This was formerly the site of the Long Valley Ranch which the Padre and the Inyo Associates fought so hard and long to see developed into the Long Valley Dam and reservoir. Since the property had once been Fred Eaton's, some thought it might be appropriate to give it his name. Years later, The *Inyo Register* of Nov. 7, 1963 published the story at the time of Ralph Merritt's death: "Ralph[Merritt] told H.A. Van Norman, head of the L.A. Department of Water and Power, 'YOU can give him the best of all memorials.' Van sat there for considerable time, thinking, and then said: 'Ralph, that's the best idea I've heard from you for a long time. I've been damn mad at Crowley in my time, but if it hadn't been for him forcing my hand there wouldn't be any lake,–I guess it's a fitting tribute to his ability to name it after him–I'll see that it's done.'"[127]

Accordingly, in October 1941 a dedication ceremony was held with two of the Crowley nephews, Byron and Walter Hansen, and the poet David S. Bromley, unveiling the monument. (This monument was once on Highway 395, but because of subsequent highway alignments, is now located on Crowley Lake Drive near the Community Center.) H.A. Van Norman admitted that the Padre had won out after all and was the chairman of the day. It is interesting to note that several years later a small reservoir in the San Fernando Valley bears the name of Van Norman. Douglas Joseph, new President of the Inyo-Mono Associates made the opening remarks; George Savage provided the historical background; Will Chalfant spoke for Inyo County; Mrs. Venita McPherson of the Mono Inn represented Mono County; Clinton E. Miller, president of the Water and Power Commission read Mayor Fletcher Bowron's speech for the City of Los Angeles: "This monument...also marks the beginning of a new era, an era of greater opportunity for the people and the communities of Inyo and Mono." [128]

The benediction was given by his seminary friend, Bishop Thomas Gorman of Reno. In his remarks he added: "Father John Crowley was born near Lake Killarney, whose waters are famed in story and song and it therefore is supremely fitting that this vast lake, in the heart of the country where he lived and worked and died should bear his name."[129] Many other friends and dignitaries, about 675 in all, were present including Governor E.P. Carville of Nevada.

The printed program included a description of the Lake, the Dam and the Mono Crater Tunnels–a system which would store water and provide electrical power to the area. The lake is seven miles long and three miles wide with a shoreline when filled of 22 miles and containing 60 billion gallons of water, or 183,000 acre feet. Also included in the program was a photo of the Padre and the following tribute: "A Catholic Priest, this Man of God became the leader of all who sought the upbuilding of Inyo-Mono. As Pastor of his Church he gave his life to his religion and to those of his faith, but his interests in life included all men of all faiths. These followed him because he served only God and his fellowman. He was the inspired guiding genius of the Inyo-Mono Association, and its accomplishments are his greatest memorial. Brilliant of mind, experienced in the world, devotedly idealistic, deeply spiritual, resourceful, unselfish, and unconquerable, his stature matched the mountains he loved so well. The spirit of Father Crowley will never die."[130]

The actual stone monument bears a plaque with a short inscription in his honor. Later a smaller plaque was erected on Highway 395 between the Hilton Creek exit and the McGee Creek exit. Today Crowley Lake is famous as the site of the annual "Crowley Opener" or the beginning of the fishing season in the area, usually the last Saturday in April. It is a refreshing haven for valley residents and tourists who enjoy fishing, boating and other water sports as well as viewing the majestic Sierra Nevada to the west and the White Mountains to the east. The lake is at an elevation of about 6,800 feet, so has a mild climate in summer. The Padre would be so pleased to hear the thousands of "fish stories" that now come from "his" lake.

The All Souls Memorial Chapel was never built. At the time of his death Father Crowley had been carrying with him information that Sister Anna Chambers (whose funeral he had just attended the day before his death) had left him a considerable sum of money in her will. He may not even have been aware of this as the unopened envelope was found on his body at the time of the accident. It took two years for his will and hers to be probated. As Father Crowley had written his will in 1933 when he was so critically ill, he had little in his possession at that time. He had never revised it. He left his clothes, fishing tackle and books to his brother Fred. Anything else he left to the administrator of his estate, Father Dowling, who had been a lifelong friend. The chapel was not mentioned. Father Crowley's debts were paid, as well as estate taxes, fees of the executor, lawyer and accountant. The remainder of his

estate went back to the diocesan fund and was spent to repay some expenses that Father Crowley had incurred that he considered parish expenses but the bishop thought were not. Father Crowley had asked that some Masses be said for his soul and this was done.

As sufficient funds were not available, Ralph Merritt, the Inyo Associates and other friends attempted to continue the efforts to build the chapel, but World War II intervened and all plans by his friends were put on hold. It had been hoped by many that his remains would one day be transferred to the All Souls Memorial Chapel, but that was not to be. The Inyo Associates continued their interest and finally came up with what they thought would be a fitting memorial. This did not materialize until many years later.

The Padre's memory was revived in May of 1944 when Irving Stone wrote a story entitled "Desert Padre" in the *Saturday Evening Post.* He had met with several of Father Crowley's friends and was impressed with the stature of the man. It not only made Father Crowley famous but also helped promote tourism to his beloved Owens Valley–something he would have loved. Irving Stone had also planned a movie script on the life of the Padre but this was never produced. In October 1947 another article in the *Desert* magazine entitled "Padre of the Desert" was written by Margaret Phillips, the wife of Curtis Phillips, the photographer who had provided so many of the promotional photographs of the various events sponsored by the Padre. She personally knew the Padre so could speak from her own contacts with him.

In the early '50s the Padre's youngest brother, Father George Crowley, S.J. wrote a draft of an inspirational book called "Desert Padre," the book to be directed at young boys who might be thinking of becoming priests. This was never published but serves as a source of some otherwise unknown aspects of the Padre's life.

Finally in 1963 Father Crowley's friends and acquaintances had still not forgotten him. Although it was not possible to build the All Souls Memorial Chapel, they came up with a different idea. The Death Valley '49ers and the Inyo Associates teamed up with Helen Gunn Edwards to place a monument at a site on Highway 190, the road that Father Crowley had traveled so many times on his way to Death Valley. The site selected was a small turnout on the highway with Rainbow Canyon to the west and a magnificent view of Death Valley to the east and north. It was often used by the Padre as a favorite rest stop. It gave him time to meditate and enjoy the view. Major Robert Edwards and Mrs. Helen Gunn Edwards provided the funds for the stone monument; Dobe

Gunnarson, Steve Esteves' former stone mason helper, constructed the monument; Cyria Henderson, wife of *Desert* magazine's editor, Randall Henderson, sculpted the bronze plaque of the bust of Father Crowley. The inscription was composed by Ralph Merritt and reads:

Padre Crowley Point
In memory of the Padre of the Desert
Father John J. Crowley
From the Snowy Heights of the Sierras
Beyond the Deep Shadows of Death Valley
Beloved and Trusted by People of all Faiths.
He led them toward Life's wider horizons.
He passed this way.
Dedicated by the Death Valley '49ers
November 7, 1963.

Sad to relate, his good friend and composer of the above lines, Ralph Merritt, was not present as he had died a few months previously. The lines "he passed this way" were probably inspired by a letter entitled "Shepherd of the Sage" written by the cowboy poet, Curley Fletcher, on the occasion of Father Crowley's death.

Father Crowley's sister, Nora Hansen, unveiled the monument at a solemn ceremony in conjunction with the annual Death Valley '49ers Encampment that year. The monument originally had a cement cross atop the stone monument but it was vandalized and never replaced. Unfortunately, the plaque has also been the object of target shooters or vandals, but the Knights of Columbus of Ridgecrest have assumed the task of repairing the damage. Prior to 1994 the location was just outside of the Death Valley National Monument. After the passage of the Desert Protection Act in 1994, the site is included in the Death Valley National Park boundaries. It is about 42 miles east of Lone Pine or eight miles west of Panamint Springs Resort. There is a large area for visitors to park and a short six-tenths of a mile drive from the monument to the lookout point. The "Father Crowley Vista Point" is a favorite rest stop on the highway.

No doubt Father Crowley would have been pleased to see that the site is now within Park boundaries. He had recommended in his columns that Darwin Falls, Panamint City, Saline Valley and other sites be included in the park boundaries. It took a long time, but Congress finally agreed with him. As always, he was many years ahead of his time.

Of his spiritual influence on people he knew, no doubt there were many unrecorded stories. However, there is one documented account

that was told by George Pipkin in his book *Pete Aguereberry.* He relates a story told him by Helen Gunn Edwards regarding her contact with the old Basque prospector:

"During Father John J. Crowley's visits to Death Valley to say Mass at Death Valley Junction, Furnace Creek Inn and at the Civilian Conservation Camp on Cow Creek, he many times drove to Pete's home at Harrisburg Flat where he spent the night and said Mass the following morning before going on his way. Pete, who had served as an altar boy in France, served the altar for Father Crowley, remembering the Latin responses. Pete had not been to confession in 40 years. Father Crowley would talk to him about it, and ask him to come to confession and Holy Communion. Pete always promised that he would.

"The summer after Father Crowley was so tragically killed in an automobile accident, Pete went to visit Helen Gunn for a week at her home in Independence. While he was there, he told her of his promise to Father Crowley, and he asked her to help prepare him for the confession. Helen invited Father Maginnis, a Jesuit priest in Mono County for the summer, to come to her home and talk to Pete, which he did. She also invited Father Smith, the pastor of Santa Rosa Church, to dinner one night. After the meal she retired leaving the Father and Pete to discuss Pete's going to confession. They decided on Sunday morning, before the early Mass, at 7:30. Pete was up and dressed at 5:30 waiting to go. Helen and he started about six as he was anxious to be there early.

"They waited in the church until Father Smith came in the confessional at 7:00. Then Pete made his confession. During the Mass, Helen and he went to Holy Communion and when Pete left the altar railing and returned to his seat, he faced the altar and said, 'Father Crowley, I have kept my promise to you.' All who heard were touched by his sincerity." [131]

Pete died in 1945 and is buried in the Lone Pine cemetery.

Carl Glasscock, of the famous *Death Valley Chuck-Walla* magazine, dedicated his book *Here's Death Valley* to the Padre. Apparently, he never held any grudges against the Padre for the good-natured ribbing he had taken at the California Newspaper Publishers Association meeting a few years back. He quotes Inyokel's entire column of "Sage and Tumbleweed" which tells of Steve (Serafin) Esteves, the stone mason.

Others who wrote of the Padre were Ed Ainsworth, George Palmer Putnam, and several who mentioned his role in the Owens Valley water controversy. George Palmer Putnam, who remarried after Amelia Earhart Putnam's disappearance in the Pacific, was looking for a writer's retreat and small cabin where he and his wife could enjoy the simple life in a

beautiful natural setting. They found it in Father Crowley's stone cabin at Whitney Portal. They purchased it and he describes it very lyrically in his biography *Wide Margins* written in 1942. During the war he joined the Air Force as a Major, divorced and then married Peg Haviland. They lived in the cabin year round until 1947 when Putnam purchased Stovepipe Wells Hotel. Then they spent their winters at the hotel and lived at the cabin in the summer. Putnam died in 1950 and Peg Putnam continued living at the cabin until it burned down in 1953 when a hot water heater exploded as she was lighting it. After the fire, the site was purchased by a succession of owners who built a summer cabin there.

Several of his desert churches have a colorful after-life. The old one in Bishop, on the corner of Elm and Hammond, which he had constructed in 1922 was moved in 1972 to the Laws Museum, six miles from Bishop, and is now the museum library. Three of the old church pews are there. The museum has a collection on file of photos taken during Father Crowley's time. The Barstow Church was torn down when a new one was built.

The original Santa Rosa Church site in Lone Pine was sold to build additional rooms, a swimming pool and spa at the Dow Villa Motel. Part of the old church building was moved to the new Santa Rosa Church on Locust Street in Lone Pine and serves as the parish hall. The bell was too big for the new church, so was offered to someone who could remove it from the bell tower. It now resides on the property of a Lone Pine resident. Part of the rectory and its circular window adorns the home of a descendant of the Carrasco family; the door graces another local home. St. Ann's Church in Keeler had to be closed because of the loss of parishioners after the demise of the Natural Soda Products Company and was purchased by the Lone Pine Country Club and used as a clubhouse, until it burned down in 1963.

Oddly enough, the only survivor of the Padre's churches (aside from the Cathedral in Fresno) is the oldest–the Santa Barbara Church in Randsburg, which was built in 1904. It is propped up by two telephone poles put there at one time before the sub-structure was reinforced and the poles were never removed. It is freshly painted in white with blue trim and is lovingly cared for by the local residents as a landmark of old Randsburg. Mass is still said there on occasion, served by priests from Ridgecrest. A visitor there can almost feel the presence of the Padre stepping out of the small wooden confessional in the back of the church and proceeding up the aisle to the simple altar. The painting of Saint Barbara which used to be behind the altar is now located on a side wall

in the back of the church. Otherwise, the church remains as he knew it.

His brother, Father Fred Crowley, was appointed pastor at Lone Pine from 1945 to 1948. Father Harry Clinch went on to become the first bishop of Monterey. Ray Quirin became a Jesuit brother. Ralph Merritt became director of the Japanese-American Relocation Camp at Manzanar during World War II and helped with the building of the Visitor Center at Death Valley.

Photos of Father Crowley and his times can be found at the Eastern California Museum in Independence, the Maturango Museum in Ridgecrest, and the Laws Museum outside of Bishop.

His memory, however, is with us still–in the monuments erected to his memory, in the lake which bears his name, in the revitalized Owens Valley, in the hearts of those who were touched by him, and now I trust, in this book which recounts as much as possible about the life, work and writings of this remarkable priest and "real man."

NOTES

ABBREVIATIONS:

ECM	Eastern California Museum, Independence, CA.
HC	Holy Cross College Archives, Fr. John Nelligan, S.J., archivist.
JJC	(Fr.) John J. Crowley.
PF	Personnel file of Fr. John J. Crowley, Fresno Diocese Archives.
PS	(Fr./Bishop) Phillip Scher.
RM	Ralph Merritt

1. Yearbook note, *Purple Patcher, Class of 1915*, p. 69. HC.
2. George Crowley, S.J., *Desert Padre* unpublished booklet, courtesy Byron Hansen, n.d.
3. JJC, "Sage and Tumbleweed,"*Central California Register*, August 9, 1936.
4. Letter of JJC to a Bishop in Ireland, 1927. PF.
5. JJC, "Musings of Seumas-A Stone from Muckross." *Holy Cross Purple.* December 12, 1912, p. 157. HC.
6. George Crowley, S.J. *Desert Padre.* Unpublished booklet, courtesy Byron Hansen, n.d.
7. Obituary notice from a previous interview with Sisters Petra and Paula Crowley, 1988, courtesy Sisters of Mercy Archives, Burlingame, CA.
8. JJC. "My Two Colleens,"*The Optimist*, n.d. (circa1915?), courtesy Lou Pracchia.
9. JJC, "Carcassonne,"*Holy Cross Purple*, November 1912, p 79. HC.
10. Letter of Frank J. Crowley to author, January 22, 1995.
11. Sister Petra Berg, Personal communication with author, December 27, 1995.
12. [JJC], "Autobiography of a Student's Soul," unsigned article in *America*, September 5, 1914, p. 509.
13. JJC, Editorial, *Holy Cross Purple* , March 1915, p. 363. HC.
14. Editorial, "Seniors and 'The Purple,'" *The Purple Patcher*, June 1915, p. 175. HC.
15. JJC, Editorial, *Holy Cross Purple*, June 1915, p. 588. HC.
16. Editorial, *Holy Cross Purple*, June 1915, p. 591. HC.
17. JJC, "Frost Fairies," n.d., courtesy Byron Hansen.
18. Yearbook note, *Purple Patcher*, 1915, p. 69. HC.
19. Letter of Rev. J.N. Dinand, S.J. to Bishop Thomas Conaty, August 3, 1915. PF.
20. Letter of Rev. William Foley to Bishop Thomas Conaty, August 9, 1915, PF.
21. "West Loses Leader in Untimely Death of Far-Famed 'Padre of the Desert,'"*The Voice*, April 1940, p. 11, St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore, MD.,HC.

22. Letter of Bishop John J. Cantwell to Very Rev. Edward Dyer, March 22, 1918, PF.
23. Telegram of Bishop John J. Cantwell to Very Rev. Edward Dyer, March 25, 1918, PF.
24. Letter of JJC to Bishop John J. Cantwell, May 1, 1918, PF.
25. Letter of Bishop John J. Cantwell to JJC May 7, 1918, PF.
26. Letter of JJC to Bishop John J. Cantwell, June 4, 1918, PF.
27. Letter of JJC to Bishop John J. Cantwell, June 18, 1918, PF.
28. Letter of Bishop John J. Cantwell to JJC, February 5, 1920, PF.
29. Letter of JJC to Bishop John J. Cantwell, November 5, 1919, PF.
30. JJC, "Inyo, County of Contrasts," The *Tidings,* newspaper of the Los Angeles Diocese, August 8, 1924.
31. [JJC], "In the Footsteps of Junipero- By a California Missionary," *Extension Magazine,* April 1922, p. 9. Extension Society, Chicago, IL.
32. JJC, "Inyo, County of Contrasts," The *Tidings*, newspaper of the Los Angeles Diocese, August 8, 1924.
33. Letter of JJC to Bishop John J. Cantwell, February 5, 1922, PF.
34. Irene Gage Sundberg, Personal communication with author, January 27,1995.
35. *Central California Register* June 19, 1932.
36. Mary Gower Albright, Personal communication with author, February 28, 1995.
37. Letter of JJC to Henry Walsh, March 27, 1930, PF.
38. Letter of JJC to PS, October 19, 1931, PF.
39. Letter of JJC to PS, June 3, 1932. PF.
40. Letter of JJC to PS, May 8, 1933, PF.
41. Letter of JJC to PS, August 4, 1933, PF.
42. George Crowley, letter of JJC to George Crowley quoted in "Desert Padre," unpublished manuscript, n.d., (circa 1950s?), p. 288,courtesy California Province of Society of Jesus, Los Gatos, California.
43. Letter of Sister Paula Crowley to Monsignor James Dowling, April 13, 1940, PF.
44. Letter of JJC to PS, January 18, 1934, PF.
45. Letter of JJC to Monsignor James Culleton, February 19, 1934, PF.
46. JJC, unpublished column for "Sage and Tumbleweed," n.d., courtesy of Lou Pracchia.
47. Irving Stone, "Desert Padre," *Saturday Evening Post*, May 1944, p. 9.
48. JJC, "Musings of Seumas-One Touch O' Nature," *Holy Cross Purple*, October, 1914, HC.
49. "Sage and Tumbleweed," *Central California Register, Annual 1940.* p. 37.
50. Claire Dueker, letter to author, January 20, 1995.
51. Herman Berg, unpublished manuscript, 1935, courtesy John Berg.
52. *Inyo Register*, February 18, 1937.
53. Herman Berg, unpublished manuscript, 1935, courtesy John Berg.
54. Herman Berg, unpublished manuscript, 1935, courtesy John Berg.

55. Herman Berg, unpublished manuscript, 1935, courtesy John Berg.
56. Herman Berg, unpublished manuscript, 1935, courtesy John Berg.
57. *Inyo Independent*, February 22, 1935.
58. *Inyo Independent*, May 31, 1935.
59. Letter from JJC to RM, September 27, 1938, ECM.
60. 78. Fr. Clare, S.J., *The Science of Spiritual Life*, p. 67, and 167. London: R. & T. Washbourne Ltd. 1912, courtesy of Frank Crowley.
61. *Atlantic Monthly* (?) n.d., clipping attached to above book, title and author unknown.
62. Fr. Clare, S.J., *The Science of Spiritual Life*, p. 68, London: R. & T. Washbourne Ltd, 1912, courtesy of Frank Crowley.
63. Margaret Phillips, "Padre of the Desert," *Desert*, October 1947, p. 5.
64. Letter of PS to JJC, December 5, 1935, PF.
65. *Inyo Independent*, May 24, 1935.
66. Letter of PS to JJC, June 16, 1936, PF.
67. Letter of PS to JJC, May 28, 1937, PF.
68. Letter of JJC to PS, December 19, 1938, PF.
69. *Inyo Register*, March 19, 1936.
70. Arthur Jaseau, letter to author, February 11,1995.
71. Central California Register, March 31, 1940.
72. William Kahrl, *Water and Power*, p. 362, 526.
73. *Inyo Independent*, April 26, 1935.
74. *Inyo Independent*, May 1, 1936.
75. *Inyo Independent*, June 7, 1935.
76. *Inyo Independent*, October 4, 1935.
77. Irving Stone, "Desert Padre," *Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1944, p. 106.
78. *Central California Register Annual*, 1937.
79. *Inyo Independent*, January 24, 1936.
80. *Inyo Independent*, February 7, 1936.
81. *Inyo Independent*, March 6, 1936.
82. *Inyo Independent*, March 6, 1936.
83. *Inyo Independent*, March 20, 1936.
84. *Inyo Independent*, March 13, 1936.
85. *Inyo Independent*, March 27, 1936.
86. *Inyo Independent*, March 20, 1936.
87. *Inyo Independent*, March 20, 1936.
88. *Inyo Register*, March 24, 1938.
89. Letter of RM to JJC, July 7, 1938, ECM.
90. Letter of RM to JJC, July 7, 1938, ECM.
91. Letter of JJC to RM, July 12, 1938, ECM.
92. Letter of RM to JJC, July 19, 1938, ECM.
93. Letter of JJC to RM, July 21, 1938, ECM.
94. Letter of JJC to RM, August 6, 1938, ECM.

95. Letter of JJC to RM, August 15, 1938, ECM.
96. Letter of JJC to RM, August 15, 1938, ECM.
97. Letter of RM to JJC August 17, 1938, ECM.
98. Letter of RM to Steve Cunningham, August 17,1938, ECM.
99. Letter of RM to JJC, August 22, 1938, ECM.
100. Letter of JJC to RM, August 24, 1938, ECM.
101. RM, typescript of presentation as Chairman of the Committee on Relations with the City of Los Angeles, September 7, 1938, ECM.
102. *Inyo Register*, September 8, 1938.
103. Letter of JJC to RM, September 14, 1938, ECM.
104. Letter of RM to Arthur Mullen, September 19, 1938, ECM.
105. Letter of JJC to Mayor Fletcher Bowron, October 3, 1938, ECM.
106. RM, letter to *Central California Register*, October 16, 1938.
107. Guest Editorial, *Central California Register*, October 16, 1938.
108. *Inyo Register*, November 7, 1963.
109. *Inyo Register*, December 29, 1938.
110. JJC, Promotional Flyer for All Souls Memorial Chapel, courtesy Lou Pracchia.
111. *New York Sun*, August 19, 1939.
112. Carl Glasscock, "Padre of the Desert,"*Westways*, March 1941, p. 2.
113. "Death Valley Rambler," *Inyo Independent*, April 5, 1940.
114. *Central California Register*, March 31, 1940
115. *Inyo Independent*, March 22, 1940.
116. Irving Stone, "Desert Padre," *Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1944, p. 107.
117. *Central California Register*, March 31, 1940.
118. Ken Crist, *Los Angeles Times*, March 20, 1940.
119. *Intake*, April 1940, p. 2.
120. *Inyo Independent*, March 22, 1940.
121. *Inyo Independent*, March 22, 1940.
122. *Inyo Independent*, March 22, 1940.
123. *Inyo Independent*, March 22, 1940.
124. *Inyo Independent*, March 22, 1940.
125. *Central California Register*, March 31, 1940.
126. *Inyo Independent*, April 5, 1940.
127. *Inyo Register*, November 7, 1963.
128. *Los Angeles Examiner*, October 19, 1941.
129. *Inyo Independent*, October 24, 1941.
130. Program Leaflet of Dedication of Crowley Lake, October 19, 1941, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power.
131. George C. Pipkin, *Pete Aguereberry*, 1982, p. 146-148.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Austin, Mary. *The Land of Little Rain*. New York: Houghton Mifflin & Co., 1903 (Reprint. Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press,1974)

Borg, David F. *The Great Depression: An Eyewitness History*. New York: Facts on File, Inc.,1996.

Carr, Harry. *Los Angeles City of Dreams*. New York: Appleton-Century Company, 1935.

Caruthers, William. *Loafing Along Death Valley Trails*. Palm Desert, CA: Desert Magazine Press,1951.

Chalfant, W.A. *Death Valley: The Facts.Third ed.* Stanford, CA.: Stanford University Press, 1936.

_____*The Story of Inyo. Rev. Ed.* Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 1933.

Clark, Lew and Ginny. *High Mountains and Deep Valleys*. San Luis Obispo, CA.: Western Trails Publications, 1978.

Clark, Ginny. *Guide to Highway 395 Los Angeles to Reno.* San Luis Obispo, CA.: Western Trails Publications, 1990.

Coolidge, Dane. *Death Valley Prospectors*. New York: E.P. Dutton, Co. Inc., 1937.(Second Ed., Morongo Valley, CA: Sagebrush Press, 1985)

Davis, Margaret Leslie. *Rivers in the Desert*. New York: Harper Collins Pub lishers, 1993.

DeDecker, Mary. *White Smith's Fabulous Salt Tram*. Death Valley, CA.: Death Valley '49ers, Inc., 1993.

DiPol, C. John. *The Parish of Randsburg and St. Ann, Ridgecrest.* Ridgecrest, CA.: Privately published, 1996.

Farnsworth, Harriet. *Remnants of the Old West*. San Antonio: The Naylor Company, 1965.

Federal Writers' Project. *Death Valley, A Guide*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1939 (Reprinted as *The Death Valley1938 WPA Guide updated.* Santa Barbara: Olympus Press, 1991)

Gebhardt, Chuck. *Inside Death Valley*. Privately Published, 1988.

Glasscock, C.B. *Here's Death Valley*. Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1940.

Gower, Harry P. *50 Years in Death Valley: Memoirs of a Borax Man*. San Bernardino, CA.: Inland Printing, Inc., 1969.

Hoffman, Abraham. *Vision or Villainy: Origins of the Owens Valley-Los Angeles Water Controversy*. College Station, TX.: Texas A & M University Press, 1981.

Hoffman, Helen. *Owens Valley, A Guide to Independence and Lone Pine*. Bishop, CA.: Chalfant Press, 1984.

Holland, Dave. *On Location in Lone Pine*. Granada Hills, CA.: The Holland

House, 1990.
Irwin, Sue. *California's Eastern Sierra:A Visitor's Guide*. Los Olivos, CA.: Cachuma Press, 1991.
Jaeger, Edmund C. *California Deserts*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1933.
Johnson, Leroy and Jean. *Escape From Death Valley*. Reno and Las Vegas: University of Nevada Press, 1987.
Kahrl, William L. *Water and Power:The Conflict over Los Angeles' Water Supply in the Owens Valley*. Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 1982.
Lee, Bourke. *Death Valley*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1930
_____*Death Valley Men*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1932.
Lee, W. Storrs. *Great California Deserts*. New York: G.P. Putnam, 1963.
Likes, Robert C. and Day, Glenn R. *From This Mountain-Cerro Gordo*. Bishop: Chalfant Press Inc. 1975.
Lingenfelter, Richard E. *Death Valley and the Amargosa: A Land of Illusion*. Berkeley, CA.: University of California Press, 1986.
_____ and Dwyer, Richard. Eds. *Death Valley Lore: Classic Tales of Fantasy, Adventure and Mystery*. Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1988.
Loflinck, Sewell "Pop". *Mojave Desert Ramblings*. China Lake, Ridgecrest, CA.: Maturango Museum, 1966.
Manly, William Lewis. *Death Valley in '49*. San Jose, CA.: The Pacific Tree and Vine Co., 1894. (Reprint, Alexandria, VA: Time-Life Books Inc., 1982)
Nadeau, Remi A. *The Water Seekers*. Santa Barbara, CA.: Peregrine Smith Inc., 1950. (Revised Ed. Santa Barbara: Peregrine Smith Inc., 1974)
Paher, Stanley. *Death Valley Ghost Towns, Vol.* I. Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 1981.
Paher, Stanley. *Death Valley Ghost Towns, Vol. II*. Las Vegas: Nevada Publications, 1982.
Perkins, Edna Brush. *The White Heart of the Mojave*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922.
Pipkin, George C. *Pete Aguereberry*. Trona, CA.: Murchison Publications, 1971.(Second Ed. Trona, CA: Murchison Publications, 1982)
Putnam, George Palmer. *Death Valley and Its Country*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, Inc., 1946.
_____*Up In Our Country*. New York: Duell, Sloan and Pearce, 1950.
_____*Wide Margins: A Publisher's Biography*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1942.
Putnam, Jeff and Smith, Genny, Eds. *Deepest Valley: Guide to Owens Valley*. Mammoth Lakes, CA.: Genny Smith Books, 1995.
Reisner, Marc. *Cadillac Desert: The American West and Its Disappearing Water*. New York: Viking, 1986.
Smith, Genny., Ed., *Mammoth Lakes Sierra: A Handbook for Roadside and Trail, 6th ed.* Mammoth Lakes, CA.: Genny Smith Books, 1993.

Spears, John Randolph. *Illustrated Sketches of Death Valley and Other Borax Deserts of the Pacific Coast.* Chicago and New York: Rand McNally and Company Publishers,1892. (Reprint. Morongo Valley: Sagebrush Press, 1977)

Stone, Irving. *The Irving Stone Reader*. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1963. (Has a longer version of the *Saturday Evening Post* May 20,1944 article.)

Tolford, Hugh. *Take the Train to Death Valley: Death Valley Railroad, LTD*. Death Valley: The Death Valley '49ers, Inc., 1995.

Tucker, Harry. *Stovepipe Wells Village*. Los Angeles: The Death Valley Forty-Niners, 1992.

Walton, John. *Western Times and Water Wars: State Culture, and Rebellion in California*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992.

Weber, Rev. Francis J. *Catholic Footprints in California*. Newhall, CA.: Hogarth Press, 1970.

Wheat, Carl. *Trailing the Forty-Niners Through Death Valley*. San Francisco: Privately printed, 1939.

Wilson, Neill. *Silver Stampede*: *The Career of Death Valley's Hell-Camp, Old Panamint*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1937. (Reprint. Glorieta, NM: The Rio Grande Press, Inc., 1987)

Wolff, John E. *Route of the Manly Party of 1849-1850 in Leaving Death Valley for the Coast*. Privately printed. n.d. [1931].

Wood, Richard Coke. *Owens Valley and the Los Angeles Water Controversy*. Stockton, CA.: University of the Pacific, 1973.

Wynn, Marcia Rittenhouse. *Desert Bonanza: Story of Early Randsburg*. Glendale, CA.: Arthur H. Clark, Co., 1963.

MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Ainsworth, Ed. "Life Begins in Owens Valley." *Los Angeles Times Sunday Magazine,* January 28, 1940.

Brown, Bob. "Inyo-Mono Comes Back." *California-Magazine of the Pacific, April 1940.*

[Crowley, John J.] "Autobiography of a Student's Soul." *America,* September 5, 1914.

[Crowley, Rev. John J.] "In the Footsteps of Junipero: By a California Missionary." *Extension Magazine,* April 1922.

Crowley, Rev. John J. "Inyo, the County of Contrasts." *Tidings*, August 8, 1924.

Delameter, John A., as told to John Edwin Hogg. "My 40 Years of Pulling Freight." *Touring Topics*, August 1930.

Glasscock, C.B. "Padre of the Desert." *Westways*, March 1941.

Phillips, Margaret. "Padre of the Desert." *Desert,* October 1947.

Price, Jean and James N. "The Wedding of the Waters." *The Album*, 1993.

Sagal, Peter. "Journey to the Source." *Westways*, November 1992.
Stone, Irving. "Desert Padre." *Saturday Evening Post*, May 20, 1944.

UNSIGNED ARTICLES AND PAMPHLETS

"Impressive Ceremony to Dedicate Crowley Lake." *Intake*, October 1941.
"Mass of the Fisher-Folk." *Westways*, April 1940.
"New Death Valley Highway." *California Highways and Public Works*, November 1937.
"'Padre of the Desert' Mourned." *Intake*, April 1940.
"Remembrance." *Westways*, December 1939.
"Santa Rosa Parish 75th Anniversary Souvenir Booklet." Lone Pine, CA: Santa Rosa Catholic Church, 1994.
"The Wedding of the Waters." *The Register Annual*,1937.
"Wedding of the Waters." *Westways*, December 1937.
"West Loses Leader in Untimely Death of Far-Famed 'Padre of the Desert'." *The Voice*, April 1940.

UNPUBLISHED MANUSCRIPT

Crowley, Rev. George, S.J. *Desert Padre*. California Province, Society of Jesus, Los Gatos, CA. circa 1950.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

The Album (Bishop, CA) Quarterly and Annual, 1987-1996
Central California Register (Fresno, CA) 1929-1940.
Inyo Independent (Independence, CA) 1934-1953.
Inyo Register (Bishop, CA) 1935-1963.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I was allowed access to the original copies of the *Central California Register* by Bishop John Steinbock of the Fresno diocese and the generous assistance of the Chancellor and archivist, Father Perry Kavookjian. This enabled me to find all the copies of "Sage and Tumbleweed" and news items. The diocese also provided letters from Father Crowley's file.

My "readers" Kathy Barnes, Alice Bailes Bell, Phil Brigandi, Ann Marie Cousineau and Willma Gore made many valuable suggestions as to content and format. Barbara Foulds helped with proof reading.

Bishop Harry A. Clinch provided the Foreword, some photos and memories of his friend and mentor, and was a "morale booster."

Frank Crowley was an invaluable source of family details of his uncle, along with two other nephews of Father Crowley—Bryon and Walter Hansen. Frank and Rose Crowley provided congenial company and hospitality in their Lone Pine cabin.

Deacon John Burns of Santa Rosa Church was one of the first to guide me in finding resources for this book and saved me a seat at the 75th anniversary of the Santa Rosa parish in Lone Pine, where I met several informants.

The following institutions were helpful with information and services: The Eastern California Museum, Independence; Laws Railroad Museum and Historical Site, Laws; Maturango Museum, Ridgecrest; Death Valley Visitor's Center; Eastern Sierra Inter-Agency Visitor Center, Lone Pine; University of Oregon; College of the Holy Cross; The Inyo County Libraries at Independence, Lone Pine and Bishop; Worcester Public Library; Riverside County Libraries at Desert Hot Springs and Palm Desert; Palm Springs Library; Beale Library, Bakersfield; Fresno Library; College of the Desert Library, Palm Desert; University of San Diego Library; San Bernardino City Library; St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore; California Province of the Society of Jesus, Los Gatos; Santa Rosa Church, Lone Pine; St. Ann's Church, Ridgecrest; The National Association of CCC Alumni; The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power; The Death Valley '49ers; Caltrans.

The list of persons who gave me information or who pointed me in the right direction is a long one. Some of them (I hope I have not forgotten anyone) in alphabetical order are: W.O. Abbott, Phyllis Absalom, Russ Adams, Pauline (Ruiz) Aigner, Mary (Gower) Albright, Relles (Carrasco) Amick, Elisa (Brichaga) Ashworth, Robert Ashworth, Dave Babb, Monsignor Joseph Barnes, Lila Bauter, Bruce Bell, John H. Berg, Sr. Petra Berg, Walter Berg, Alina Berry, B. J. Bonham, Dorothy and Dona Bonnefin, Alice Boothe, Rev. John Bowen, Irene Brichaga, Marian Brooks, Margaret Brush, John J. Buckley, Lynne Bunn, Zelda Butler, Donna Carson, Chris Cavanaugh, Monsignor Kevin Cleary, Pat Coles, Brad Collins, Kari Coughlin, Dan Cronkhite, Lee Crosby, Blair Davenport, Mary DeDecker, Vincent DeSantis, John Di Pol, Claire Dueker, Dorothy Eberhardt,

Lilian Edell, Christine Estabrook, Pauline Esteves, Pat Farris, Ted Faye, Ralph Fear, Esy Fields, Jane Fisher, Judge George Francis, Marie Frascolla, John Frederickson, George Garrigues, Nancy Gaudette, Mrs. Neva Goodwin, Ted Goodwin, Sister Marilyn Gouailhardou,R.S.M., Arlene Grider, Olga Guyett, Betty Halamicek, Shirley Harding, LaVonne (Foust) Harrison, R. Bruce Harley, Monsignor J. Wayne Hayes, Robert C. Healey, Helen Hoffman, Dave Holland, Howard Holland, Jack Hopkins, Sue Irwin, Arthur Jaseau, Eric Jessen, Carol Jobin, Leroy and Jean Johnson, William Kahrl, Ernest Kinney, Richard Kizer, Louise and Dean Lemon, Ulla Lipp, Tom Lunaburg, Brother Tom Marshall, S.J., Emilie Martin, Nancy Masters, Cecilia (Berg) McBride, Nora McElroy, Flora McIlroy, Marion Medford, Daniel Meraz, Jr., Patty Merritt, Bill Michael, Sandy Miller, Gladys Millner, Martha Mills, Ray Milovich, Myrtle Murchison, Vistor Musick, Simon Napolis, Rev. John Nelligan, S.J., Bill Newbro, Jim Nikolaus, John Ochoa, Ethel Olivas, Pauline (Berg) O'Neill, Robert Palazzo, Mike Patterson, Frank Pedneau, Matias and Ernestine Perez, Bill Peterson, Monsignor E. James Peterson, George Pipkin, Julian Plaisted, Chris Plakos, Monsignor Francis J. Pointek, Charles Polzer, S.J., Lou Pracchia, Jean Price, Jim Price, Martha Proctor, Art Rath, Arlene Reveal, Robert Richards, Jr., Pat Roberts, Matthew Roth, Ed Rothfuss, Gena Runkle, Monsignor John F.C. Ryan, Paula Sassi, Robert Schindle, Charles Shelton, Phee Sherline, Bonnie Simonian, Diane Smikahl, Genny Schumacher Smith, John Southworth, Jody Stewart, Dick Stokes, Jean Stone, Irene (Gates) Sundberg, Hugh Tolford, Harry Tucker, Connie Valdez, Todd and Ella Watkins, Jennifer Watts, Monsignor Francis Weber, Jane Wehrey, Doris Weishaus, Jeff Wilensky, Jeanne Willey, Raymund F. Wood, David Wright, K.C. Wylie, Robert Chard-Yaron, Elva Younkin, and Jerry Zeutzius.

To each and all of these, I owe the tiny pieces of the puzzle which, when put together, give a picture, (although still incomplete) of the Desert Padre.

I owe a special debt of gratitude to Nicolette Sundberg who did much of my pre-press work as well as guide me through the use of the computer which she so generously lent me. She made suggestions which were very helpful.

To Marilyn and Tom Ross and their excellent staff of About Books Inc. I owe much to their competence in managing the numerous details of seeing this book to completion.

I wish to thank my husband, David, for his patience, support and encouragment during these last couple of years.

INDEX

Abbott, Bernadette 72, 74
Aguereberry, Pete 153, 158, 159, 379
Aguilera, Rev 27
Aigner, Pete 65
Ainsworth, Ed 361, 379
Alabama Hills 78, 79, 81, 268, 363
Albright, Dewey 324, 366
Albright, Horace 37
Alexander, Sam 72, 74
Alkali Ike 111
All Souls Memorial Chapel 90, 303-305, 364, 365, 368, 373, 374, 376
Amargosa River, CA 256, 257, 263
America 13-17
Ancient Order of Hibernians (AOH) 16, 20, 223
Arambula, Mrs 288, 289
Arcane, J. B. 168
Arcane, Mrs. Abigail 244, 245
Arias, Jose 329, 331, 332
Atlantic Monthly 115
Austin, Mary, 26, 27, 49, 67, 102, 243, 285-288
Automobile Club of Southern California 41, 104, 269, 318, 320, 322, 324, 325, 363, 370, 374
Autry, Gene 79

Babcock, Si 267
Badger, Clarence 85, 341
Baker, Francis 280
Bakersfield, CA 38, 41, 121, 197, 272, 365, 369, 372
Ball, Sam 327, 331
Ballarat, CA 50, 151, 158, 161, 179, 180
Bandhauer, R.J. 317
Bannon, Rev. Patrick 27, 288
Barnes, Miss 87
Barnes, Mr. and Mrs. Harold 365
Barnum, P.T. 71
Barstow, CA 26, 28, 163, 164, 380
Barstow, Miss 299
Barstow Printer Review 324
Basket Woman, The (Austin) 286
Baumgartner, John W. 343, 368
Baxter, Dr. J. Clifford 226-228, 317
Beatty, Hugh (Pat) 73, 97
Beatty, NV 151, 190, 199, 208, 209
Beery, Noah 80
Beery, Wallace 90
Begole, C.D. 252
Bell, Rollin 369
Bennett, A.K. 133, 174, 190
Bennett, Melissa 167, 168, 325, 330
Berg, Herman 64, 75-77
Big Pine, CA 25, 92, 114, 121, 154, 233, 259, 272, 317
Birdsong 74
Bishop, CA 25-31, 35, 44, 45, 66, 71-75, 88, 92, 114, 117-125, 130, 134, 136, 220, 221, 282, 283
Blair, Dr.James 252
Blake, Ed 366
Blane, Sally 165
Blight, Capt. and Mrs. Edward 217
Blue, Monte 80
Bobernits, Joe 73
Bodie, CA 222-224, 290
Bodie Mike (M. Lazovich) 78
Boland, Henry 242
Boland, Mary 297
Boland, Tom 241-243
Bonham, Ben 337, 338
Bonham, Betty 132
Bonham, Billy 132, 133
Boody, Dr 221
Boone, Rev. Charles 21
Boothe, Roy 316, 317, 324, 346
Borie, Mr. and Mrs. 299, 365
Botany of the Death Valley Expedition (Coville) 289
Bowler, George 176
Bowron, Fletcher 355, 360, 361, 368, 375
Boyd, William (see Hopalong Cassidy)
Boyer, Lena 94
Boyology 33
Breen, Joe 88, 89
Breen, Josephine 326-332
Bremmerly, John 327, 331
Breyfogle, lost mine 154-161, 174, 212, 255, 289

Brichaga, Dominga 32, 75, 78
Brichaga, Elisa 125, 132
Brichaga, Irene 32, 132
Brichaga, Lucy 117, 132
Bridgeport, CA 114, 218, 222
Brier, Juliet 50, 244
Bromley, David 373, 375
Brooks, Phyllis 86
Brown, CA 219
Brown, Charles (Charlie) 152, 154, 278, 348
Brown, George 219
Brown, Mrs. Charles (Stella) 152, 155
Brown, Robert (Bob) 362, 363, 369
Bryant, Mervyn (Slick 369
Buer, Captain Otto 191, 280
Bullfrog, NV 151, 160, 227
Bullinger, Jack and Marjorie 54
Burns, Hugh 365
Butler, Mrs. 124
Byrne, Agnes 72, 73, 130, 312, 313
Byrne, John 55, 72, 312, 313

Cadwell, Capt. C.N. 216, 368
Caffrey, Rev. 62
Cahill, W.W. (Wash) 206, 291, 294-296, 301
California Deserts (Jaeger) 42, 290, 310
California Highways and Public Works 325
California Newspaper Publishers Association 204, 205, 370, 379
Campbell, Simon 176
Campbell, Wallace 153, 156, 175, 176
Cantil, CA 230
Cantwell, John J. (Bishop of Los Angeles-Monterey) 22-25, 27, 30
Canty, D.J. 252
Carey, Captain Warren 329
Carr, Harry 62, 154, 316
Carrasco, Cris 68-70, 296
Carrasco, Jesus 339
Carrasco, Rev. Peter 27
Carrasco, Reyes 66
Carrasco, Ruperto (Bob) and Felicita 67, 68
Carrillo, Leo 90, 91, 370
Cartago, CA 26, 114
Caruthers, William 154
Carville, Gov. E.P. 375
Cashin, Rev. 223
Cassidy, Hopalong 79, 84, 87, 88, 327, 331
Catholic University, Washington, DC 16
Cato, Chief 332
Central California Register 5, 33, 34, 48-62, 112, 148, 149, 325-330, 358-360, 365, 368, 371
Central Pacific Railroad 150, 253
Cerro Gordo, CA 25, 50, 154, 172, 231, 241-244, 252, 265, 287, 330, 332, 334
Chalfant, Will 5, 60, 159, 289, 290, 307, 317, 332, 342, 344, 347, 355, 360, 361, 372, 375
Chambers, Sister Anna 365, 376
Chandler, Harry 62
Charge of the Light Brigade 64, 79, 81
Choate-Drew wedding 191
Chrysler and Cook 45, 321
Chrysler, Frank 319
Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) 45-48, 73, 114, 133, 213-217, 267, 281, 301, 361, 364, 367, 368, 371, 373
Clark College, MA 12, 14, 16, 17
Clayton, Jim 207
Cleary, Maurice 374
Clinch, Harry A. (Bishop of Monterey) 3, 37, 45-47, 57, 359, 360, 365, 366, 367, 368, 371, 374, 381
Clyde, Norman 330
Cole, Mrs. 130
Coleman, William T. 195
Colley, Don 175
Collins, Ben 125
Collins, Margaret 72, 73, 74
Collins, Mrs. Jud 130, 229
Columbia 264
Conaty, Thomas J. (Bishop of Los Angeles-Monterey) 17, 20, 21
Cook, Margaret 321
Cook, Ted 319, 320, 327
Cooper, Gary 80, 81
Corcoran, Billy 161
Coronado's Children (Dobie) 104
Coso Hot Springs, CA 270, 271
Costello, John 85
Courbon, Jules 69, 70

Cowan, Jim 219
Cowboy and the Lady, The 81
Crapo, William 242
Crist, Kenneth 370
Cronin, Mrs. 244
Crosby, Bing 267
Crosby, Gene 31, 283
Crosby, W.A. 324
Crowley, Agnes 12
Crowley, Alice (Sister Petra) 9, 10, 31, 36, 41, 372
Crowley, Frank J. (Nephew of John J. Crowley) 1, 4, 12,
Crowley, Frank M. (Brother of John J. Crowley) 9, 12, 17, 20, 22, 36, 299, 372
Crowley, Fred 9, 36, 41, 368, 372, 374, 376, 381
Crowley, George 7, 9, 41, 43, 117, 119, 122, 368, 372, 374, 376, 377
Crowley Lake, CA 4, 375, 376, 387
Crowley, May (Sister Josephine) 9, 36, 119, 372
Crowley, Michael 7, 10, 37
Crowley, Nora (Lyne) 7, 9, 10, 31, 37
Crowley, Nora (Mrs. Elmer Hansen) 9, 36, 372, 378
Crowley, Pauline (Sister Paula) 9, 10, 31, 36, 41, 372
Crucero, CA 151
Cuff 86, 87, 92-96, 374
Culleton, Msgr. James 41
Cunningham, Steve 343, 345, 349, 352, 354, 360, 361, 368
Curry, Don 187
Curtiz, Mike 87
Cushion, Tex 321, 322

Daggett, CA 163, 230, 281
Daly, Mr. and Mrs. 271
Darwin, CA 25, 26, 175, 180-187, 193, 317
Darwin Falls, CA 175-177, 184-187, 378
Davis, Judge Carl 337-339
Dayton, Jimmy 152-157, 160-162, 295, 296
De la Cerda, Juan 109, 110
Dean, Mrs. 130
Dearborn, Ollie 328, 331
Death Valley 5, 25, 26, 44, 45, 89-91, 150-217, 241-250, 364-379
Death Valley '49ers (modern group) 377, 378
Death Valley Chuck-Walla 108-110, 202-205, 379
Death Valley Days 57, 195, 197, 198, 289, 293-296, 299-305, 324, 364, 365, 373
Death Valley (Lee) 289, 292, 310
Death Valley in '49 (Manly)165, 289
Death Valley Men (Lee) 207, 289, 292
Death Valley Prospectors (Coolidge)289
Death Valley Sketches (Spears) 289
Death Valley, the Facts (Chalfant) 290. 295, 310
DeCordoba, Pedro 84, 85
Delameter, John A. 333-335
Dempsey, Jack 220
Derrick, Dr. Frank 63, 65, 121, 122
Desert magazine 4, 45, 116, 377, 378
Devine, Tom 80, 267
DeYoung Museum 33
Diaz, Emma 78
Diaz, Leppy 321
Dinand, Rev. J.N. 21
Dobie, J. Frank 160
Dockweiler, Isador 169
Dolan, Harry 67, 222-224
Dolan, Msgr. Bernard 368
Dolan, Patricia 67, 224
Dolomite, CA 233
Dornaleche, Ernestine 132
Doty, Ed 327, 328
Doty, Sidney Chester 327, 329, 332
Dougherty, Clem 230
Dougherty, Dennis Cardinal (Archbishop of Philadelphia) 39
Dow, G. Walter 317, 337, 369
Dow Hotel 63, 64, 73, 75, 86, 369,380
Dowling, Msgr. James 41, 129, 376
Drunkard, The 71-74
Duarte, Angel 49
Duarte, Cecilia (Dinky) 125
Duarte, Señora 78
Dueker, Claire 63
Dueker, Dr. Howard 63, 275, 366, 369
Duff, Mary 141
Durand, Marius 294
Dyer, Very Rev. Edward 22

Earth Horizon (Austin) 286
Eastern California Museum 4, 381
Eaton, Fred 362, 375
Edwards, Mrs. Robert (See Helen Gunn)
Ellis, Howard 64, 279, 317
Emm, Jerry 326, 331
Erskine, Clyde 133
Esteves, Pauline and Eddie 297, 298
Esteves, Serafin (Steve) 48, 297-299, 303, 365, 369, 373, 378, 379
Extension Society, Catholic Church 26, 28, 29

Fairbanks, Douglas, Jr. 86
Fairbanks, Ralph J. (Dad) 152, 335
Farman, Zoe 122
Farrant, Margaret 117
Fee, Capt. Hugh 73
Feil, Mrs. Ralph 72
Feil, Ralph 133
Fighting Men of the West (Coolidge) 289
Firefly 79, 87
Fish on Friday (Rev. Leonard Feeney) 309. 311
Fitzgerald, Frank 184, 194
Fitzgerald, Grevy 80, 280
Fitzgerald, Jerry 175, 186
Fleming, Rev. Austin 27
Fletcher, Curley 378
Flint, Marjorie 63
Floyd, Harry 186
Flynn, Errol 64, 86, 87
Flynn, Ray 88
Foin, Rev. Leo 27
Foley, Rev. William 21
Fontaine, Joan 84, 86
Ford, Edsel 280
Ford, The (Austin) 286
Fox, Rev. George Golden 93, 313
Francis, George 107-110, 339, 340, 360
Franco, Anthony 277-279
Frank, Kathro 72
Fremont, Gen. John C. 91
French, Dr. Darwin 185
Fresno, CA 1-3, 32-43, 313, 358, 365, 369, 370
Fuhr, Rev. Raphael 27, 180
Fulco, Dr. Herman 215, 216
Furnace Creek Inn 74, 91, 96, 133, 154, 162, 165, 168, 172-174, 192, 294, 297, 302

Gable, Clark 89
Galvin, Rev. John 74
Gandhi, Mahatma 273, 274
Gant, Bob 73
Garbo, Greta 81
Gardner, Bob 164, 165
Garrity, Tom 219
Gehrig, Lou 37
Gerard, James W. 189
Girl of the Golden West 266
Giroux, Roland 92, 94, 317
Glacier Lodge 114, 259
Glasscock, Carl 108, 202-206, 379
Glasscock, Harry 204
Gleason, James 74
Goldfield, NV 137, 151, 152, 158, 198, 227, 244
Goodwin, T.R. (Ray) 102, 103, 110, 154, 191, 209, 255, 258, 273, 294, 296, 324, 329, 332
Goodwin, Ted 216
Gordon, Mr. and Mrs. Bob 249-251
Gorman, Thomas (Bishop of Reno) 21, 24, 25, 98, 117, 369, 375
Gower, Charlie 191
Gower, Harry 35, 152, 191, 324
Gower, Mary 35
Gower, Mrs. Harry 133, 279
Grant, W.T. 210, 296
Graziani, Mr. and Mrs. 122
Greed 90
Green, Hetty 178, 179
Greenwater, CA 50, 201-203, 206, 249
Greenwater Miner (Gazette) 201, 202
Grey, Zane 87, 88, 243
Gunga Din 79-86
Gunn, Eva Lee 179, 210, 296
Gunn, Helen 63, 179, 183, 184, 369, 377, 379
Gunn, Jack 163, 194, 210, 296
Gunn, Tom 183, 194
Gunnarson, Dobe 48, 298, 369, 378
Gunsight, Lost mine 185, 247

Gutierrez, Mr. and Mrs. Juan 127-129
Gwinn, Herbert 272

Haiwee, CA 50, 219
Hampton, Councilman 361
Hancock, George and Hiram 145, 146
Hansen, Byron and Walter 1, 375
Happenings and More Happenings (Bartlett) 291
Harbach, M.L. 344
Hardy, Captain 329, 332
Harmon, Mr. 250
Harnett, Rev. John 142
Harrington, Mrs. Simons Ryan 154, 240, 241, 244
Harris, Shorty 68, 152-159, 160-162, 295, 335
Harrisburg Flat, CA 154, 159, 256
Harvard, Dr. 126
Hathaway, Henry 80
Hayden, J.R. 151
Hayes, Margaret 313
Hayes, Mr. 169
Henderson, Randall and Cyria 378
Henderson, Rudy 77, 145
Henry, Jim 328
Here's Death Valley (Glasscock) 284
Hession, Jess 54, 331
Hicks, George 299
Higgins, Joseph 19
Holland, Harry 72
Hollywood Humane Society 374
Holy Cross College, MA 4,12, 17, 36, 91
Holy Cross Purple 8, 11, 18, 44
Homestead, CA 222, 249
Hopkins, Jack 73, 174, 315, 317, 321, 331
Howard, Rev. 272
Howell, Franklin D. 353
Hubbard, Rev. Bernard 272
Hughes, Mr. 123
Hugo, Bud 72, 74
Hume, Olive 205
Hummingbird, Chief 191
Hungry Bill 177
Hunter, Manager 93
Hunter, Mrs. J.A. 165, 166
Hunters Flat 46-48, 315
Hutchinson, Josephine 233
Hutton, Virginia 72, 74

Ickes, Harold 110
Independence, CA 25, 252, 317
Indian George 319, 335
Inyo Associates 317, 318, 323, 341-362, 368, 377
Inyo Independent 60, 71, 83, 251, 252, 307, 316, 324, 339, 342, 355, 367, 370, 371
Inyo Register 5, 60, 74, 154, 276, 289, 307, 332, 342, 355, 360, 361, 363
Inyo-Mono Associates 362, 368, 369, 375, 376
Inyokern, CA 45, 71, 281, 364, 373
Is Zat So 74, 75

Jacobs, R. C. 192
Jaffe, Mr. and Mrs Sam 82
Jaseau, Arthur 216, 217
Jawbone Canyon, CA 229
Jenifer, F. M. 189
Jobin, Dolores 117, 131, 132
Johnson, Albert M. 188, 190, 191, 219
Johnson, Bert 296, 327, 331, 337, 338
Johnston, Phillip 289
Jones, Allan 87
Jones, Hank 330
Jones, Idwal 104, 205
Jones, Jimmy 337
Jones, Senator John P. 192
Joseph, Douglas 123. 375
Julian, Charles C. 208, 209

Kahrl, William L. 306
Kearsarge, CA 122
Keating, Father 23
Keeler, CA 26, 30, 44-47, 69, 78, 117, 119, 122, 130-132, 150, 233-239, 258, 317, 328, 350, 380
Keep, Glenn 223, 350
Keleher, Alma 117, 122
Kellcher, Mrs 130
Kelly, Henry, 85, 86
Kenna, Jim 145
Kennedy, Helen 138
Kennedy, Joseph William 136-138

Kennedy, Mrs 219
Kennedy, Msgr. Phillip 368
Kern County, CA 27, 70, 366, 369
Kern, Louis 117, 119, 122
Kerr, Mark 266, 267
Keynot Mine 233, 288
Kieffer, Jake 163, 164
Killarney, Ireland 7, 10, 375
King, Roy 73
Kleinbach, Henry 73
Kline, Dolores 125
Knights of Columbus 369, 374, 378
Kovatch, Joe 173
Kramer, CA 170, 196
Kulleck, Rev. Leo 136
Kunze, C.E. 202, 204

Lackey, Al 104
Lamona, Perry 206
Land of Little Rain (Austin) 26, 49, 102, 285, 286, 288
Lashman, Harry 374
Laws, CA 31
Laws Museum 380, 381
Leadfield, CA 208-210
Leadfield Chronicle 209
Lee, Bourke 159, 207
Lee Vining, CA 114, 225
Lefurgey, Sol 291
Lentell, John 252
Levin, Ed 272
Lida, NV 229
Life Magazine 331
Lindner, Mrs. C.H. (Agnes) 167, 168, 326, 328, 330, 336
Lion's Club 77, 134, 260, 307, 316, 337, 368, 370
Little Lake, CA 100, 269, 270
Lives of a Bengal Lancer 79-83
Livingston, 186
Lone Pine, CA 24-32, 44-88, 129, 208, 285, 315, 317, 336-341, 366-369, 380, 381
Long Valley, CA 103, 283, 312, 357, 375
Long Valley Dam, CA 357, 362, 375, 376
Longstreet, Jack 198, 199
Los Angeles Dept. of Water and Power 2, 26, 306, 318, 324, 336-363, 368, 370, 375
Los Angeles Evening News 370
Los Angeles Illustrated Daily News 87
Los Angeles (Mayo) 289
Los Angeles Times 45, 62, 316, 324, 361, 363, 370
Lowden, S.W. 317, 323
Lubken, John 344, 350, 351
Ludlow, CA 26, 151, 169, 172, 196, 219

MacBryde, Jack 299
MacDonald, Dr. Reginald 227, 228
MacDonald, Jeanette 87, 89
MacGinley, John B. (Bishop of Monterey-Fresno) 32, 37-39
Maginnis, Rev. Edward 379
Mahogany Flat, CA 261
Mammoth Lakes, CA 45, 114, 321, 322, 362
Manly, William Lewis 50, 93, 155, 161, 165-168, 200, 201, 230, 244, 245, 249, 263
Manning, "Hennie" 20
Manzanar, CA 26, 104, 381
Marron, Rev. Martin 27
Marsh, Gus 219, 295, 296
Mates, Charles 73
Mates, George 69
Maturango Museum 381
Maynard, Ken 79
Mayo, Jesse M. 336
McCarthy, William 316, 317, 344
McGinnis, Susanne 86
McGlynn, Frank Jr. 88
McGuire, Mrs. 50
McIlroy, R. B. 233, 234, 237, 238
McLaglen, Victor 85, 86
McLean Pharmacy 115
McLennan, Edward P. 191
McMahon, Jack 240
McNamara, Dr. Thaddeus M. 42, 43
McPherson, Venita 226, 375
McPherson, Wally 225
McTeague (Norriss) 289
Mecum, Rev. E.W. 330
Mee, Martin 183
Meehan, Rev. Daniel 374
Meissen, Rev. 121
Mercy Hospital, Bakersfield 41, 42

Mercy Hospital, San Diego 41, 132
Merriam, Gov. Frank 204, 316, 324, 327, 328, 331
Merritt, Ralph 37, 38, 44, 63, 114, 316, 317, 324, 341-361, 369, 372, 374, 375, 377, 381
Mestres, Msgr. Raymond 38
Meyer, Louis 328, 332
Millay, Tom 106, 107
Miller, Clinton 375
Miller, Dusty 309
Millner, Gladys (Conway) Crosby 31
Mills, Johnny 61, 89, 159-165, 174, 201, 230, 258, 298, 302, 319, 369
Mills, Ogden 150
Minnietta Mine, CA 25, 63, 107, 108, 135, 163, 178-180, 183, 194
Modoc Mine, CA 25, 178-180, 184, 194
Mojave, CA 121, 268, 269, 280, 365, 366
Mono Lake, CA 104, 151, 224-226, 357, 362
Montgomery, Bob 151
Montgomery, Mrs. 192
Mooney, Margaret 117
Moreland, Watt 345, 346, 353, 354, 368
Morgan, Bruce 321
Morgan, Don 80
"Mornin' on the Desert" 301-303
Morrison, Mrs. 72, 74, 130
Mt.Whitney Fish Hatchery 94, 310, 313, 314
Muckross Abbey, Ireland 8, 9
Mulholland, William 318, 362
Mulhouse, Isabel (Sotelo) 78
Mullen, Arthur J. 348, 350, 355
Murder in Paradise Valley 164
Murphy, Brother James 120, 139-142
Murphy, Spud 183

Nadeau, Remi 178, 334
Natural Soda Products (NSP) 131, 237, 258, 350, 380
Nellen, Carl 92, 130, 223, 277, 313
Nellen, Mrs.130
Nelson, Rev. John 147
Nevares, Dolph 162, 295, 296
New York Sun 365
New York Times 370
New York World's Fair 299, 365
Notre Dame, Indiana 35

O'Brien, Judge Joseph 198, 199
O'Brien, Pat 233, 374
O'Connell, Clark 135
O'Connell, Jim 133
O'Hara, Edwin V. (Bishop of Great Falls, MT) 116, 117
O'Keeffe, Johnny 328, 332, 333
O'Neill, Mary 182, 183
O'Neill, Rev. James 27
O'Shea, Rev. John 59
Oaks, Elmer 200
Oberon, Merle 81
Ochoa, Blanche 38, 78, 94
Oil for the Lamps of China 79, 81, 83, 233
Olancha, CA 121. 268, 282, 296, 317, 371
Olivas, Mrs. 49
Olivas, Joe 183
Ortley, Almira (see Wade, Almira)
Osborne, Dr. 137
Our Lady of Perpetual Help Church 28
Our Sunday Visitor 30
Outposts of Civilization (Chalfant) 290
Owens Lake, CA 25, 30, 45, 134, 150, 199, 214, 231-234, 236, 237, 258, 350
Owens River, CA 25, 26, 235, 237, 312, 356
Owens Valley Herald 204
Owenyo, CA 121, 219, 232-235

Pacific Coast Borax Company 35, 90, 118, 151, 164, 169, 170, 189, 196, 293, 297, 325, 364
Padgett, Bruce 167
Pahrump Ranch, NV 169, 170
Paiute Indians 27, 115
Palache, Whitney 192, 193
Palmer, Dr. Theodore 166, 295, 296
Panamint City, CA 192, 193, 290, 302, 334, 378
Panamint George 103, 166
Panamint Tom 264, 319
Panamint Springs, CA 108, 175-178, 180, 378

Parcher, Mrs. Frank 78
Parker, Judge Pat 223, 226
Parks, Joe 327
Patterson, Hank 298
Pedneau, Frank and Bessie 239, 367
Perez, Louise 94, 117, 133, 236
Perez, Matias 64, 96, 115
Perez, Mrs. 94, 135
Perry, J.S. W. 196
Pete Aguereberry (Pipkin) 379
Pettit, Geneva 73
Phillips, Curtis 377
Phillips, James E. 346. 353
Phillips, Margaret 116, 130, 377
Piet, Father 272, 273
Piñon Players 71
Pipkin, George 379
Pittman, Key 111
Pointek, Mons. Francis J. 32
Porterville, CA 40, 44
Preston, Ma 172
Price, Jean 63, 71
Price, Newton 63, 72, 73, 74
Purple Patcher 4, 18
Putnam, George Palmer, 379, 380
Putnam, Peg (Haviland) 380

Quilligan, Rev. Patrick 367
Quirin, Ray 120, 121, 139, 140, 369, 381

Rahm, Rev. Gilbert 272-274
Ramirez, Santos 287
Rammer, Sir 273, 274
Randall, Dick (The Governor) 190, 191
Randsburg, CA 26, 28, 29, 31, 151, 219, 226-230, 380
Rasin, John 220, 221, 313
Red Rock Canyon, CA 229-231
Reddy, Ned 252, 288
Reddy, Patrick 181
Reid, Bill 108, 175-178, 180, 186, 240
Reinhart, Max 88
Renner, Otto 64, 95
Revere Beach, MA 20
Rhyolite, NV 198, 199, 206, 207, 227
Rhythm on the Range 79, 84
Richards, Bob, Sr. and Jr. 136, 139, 313
Riders, Everett 256
Ridgecrest, CA 378, 380, 381
Riley, Joe 317, 324, 342, 346, 349
Ritchie, J. Lincoln 73, 74, 85
Roberts, Oliver 276
Robinson, Allie W. 317
Robles, Clara and Lupe 128, 129
Rodriguez, Dora and Rose 117
Rodriguez, girls 132
Rogers, Jim 85
Rogers, Mr. and Mrs. Jim 170-172
Rogers, Roy 79
Romero, Annie 67, 78, 287-289
Romero, Emma 242
Ronan, Kathryn 201, 202, 294, 302, 359, 369
Rotary Club 1, 33, 358
Roughing It (Twain) 225
Ruiz, Carl 73
Ruiz, Pauline 74
Ruiz, Ygnacio 248
Russell, Dr. 103
Ruth, Babe 37
Ryan, CA 151, 164, 165, 170, 196, 207, 256, 258
Ryan, Mrs. (see Harrington)

Saladon, Jesus 128
Saline Valley, CA 199, 200, 233, 238, 378,
San Bernardino, CA 167
San Bernardino County, CA 27
San Diego World's Fair 307-309
San Francisco 88, 89
San Francisco Monitor 136
Santa Barbara Church 26, 380
Santa Fe Railroad 28, 98, 151, 196, 255, 258, 365
Santa Rosa Church 4, 27, 29, 44, 64, 75-79, 288, 289, 366-369, 379
Saratoga Springs, CA 187
Satterlee, Hugh 66
Saturday Evening Post 4, 200, 377
Savedra girls 78
Savage, George 60, 307, 316, 317, 324, 339, 342, 344, 361, 368, 371, 372, 375
Scanlan, Lawrence, (Bishop of Salt Lake City 207
Scannell, Rev. Cornelius 27

Scattergood, E.F. 324, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353
Scher, Phillip (Bishop of Monterey-Fresno) 38-41, 44, 61, 124, 125, 146-149, 369
Schumacher, Joseph D. 353, 354
Science of the Spiritual Life (Rev. Clare) 115, 116
Scotty, Death Valley (Walter Scott) 50, 151, 188-191, 195, 304
Scrugham, Congressman James 55
Scrugham's History of Nevada 55
Scully, Frank 374
Selma, NY 253
Senteno, Richard 55, 125
Shadley, William 335
Shannon, Rev. 286
Shaw, Frank 355
Shaw, Indian Jim 198
Shaw, Judge Lucien 337
Shellabarger, Ranger 103
Shelton, Charles 45
Sherman, Harry 84
"Ship of the Desert" 210,213, 296
Shoshone, CA 151, 278, 293
Shoshone Indians 115
Shrum, Dr. Riley 128, 174
Silver Lake, CA 172
Silver Stampede (Wilson) 193, 290
Silvius, Tom 345, 351, 352, 353
Simons, Rev. Henry 241
Sister de Chantal 117
Sister Scholastica 121
Sister Siena 121
Sister Virginia 117
Sisters of Charity 168
Sisters of Mercy 10, 36, 37
Sisters of the Holy Family 36, 117, 119, 123, 124, 208
Skidoo, CA 151, 179, 185, 227
Skinner, Max 74, 228
"Slim Princess" 284, 331
Smith, A.T. 69
Smith, Art 184, 194
Smith, Francis M. (Borax) 195-197
Smith, H.S. 71
Smith, Rev. Joseph 367, 379
Smith, Ted 107
Smith, White 199, 233
Smithsonian Institute 45, 315
Snow White 75
Southern Pacific Railroad 151, 192, 235, 253
Spainhower, Katherine 235, 337
Spainhower, Russell 83, 84, 327, 331, 337, 338
Spear, Reuben 296
Spellman, Francis (Archbishop of New York) 299
Spencer, Blanchard and Maher 364
Spindola, Robert 87
Spratt, Jack and Tom 249
Sproule, Paul 169
St. Agnes Boarding Home for Young Women 33
St. Agnes Church 24
St. Andrew's Church 24
St. Anne's Church, Porterville 41
St. Ann's Church, Keeler 30, 236, 380
St. Columba's Guild 33
St. Columba's High School 34
St. Mary's Seminary, Baltimore 21
St. Paul's Parish, Worcester, MA 20
Standing, Sir Guy 80
Steinfeld, Miss 300
Stevens, Judge James M. 337, 340
Stevenson, Robert Louis 156
Stewart, Fred 332
Stewart, Jack 182, 249
Stewart, Senator William M. 192
Stone, Irving 4, 44, 377
Story of Inyo (Chalfant) 289, 355
Stovall, Albert 154
Stovall, Col. W.T. 204
Stovepipe Wells, CA 93, 133, 172, 174, 181, 190, 329, 380
Stowe, Mrs 54
Stringer, Art 73
Strong, Gen. J.F.A. 202
Strong, Mrs. Ted 234
Stross, Rev. Charles 147
Sullivan, Lt. Gov. 208
Sullivan, Rev. Michael 149
Summers, Mickey 135, 175, 179, 180, 182, 187
Sumner, E. Lowell, Jr. 103

Sundberg, Irene (Gage) 33
Surprise Canyon, CA 193, 302
Sutliff, Jess 316, 340
Swansea, CA 231, 248, 252, 334
Symmonds, Dusty 92
Taggart, John 239
Tehachapi, CA 59, 121, 369
Telescope Peak, CA 156, 185, 192, 215, 247, 261, 283, 328, 332
Terry, George 317
Thompson, George 64
Thundering Herd, The 80
Tibbals, Mrs. 123
Tidings, The 25, 51
Tiger Lil 205, 206
Tilton, Frank 162, 294, 295, 302
Time magazine 80, 83, 326, 332
Tinder, Glenn 317
Titus Canyon 187, 198, 199, 209, 255
Tone, Franchot 80
Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad 151, 173, 190, 255, 258, 301, 368
Torsney, Jim 176
Touring Topics 289
Tracy, Spencer 89
Tray 96-98, 287, 365, 366, 372, 374
Trona, CA 26, 216, 374
Trotter, Doc 161
Tulainyo, Lake 324, 326, 331, 332
Tuttle Creek Canyon 87
Twenty Mule Team 89, 90, 302
Two Years Before the Mast (Dana) 91

Union Pacific Railroad 151, 258

Van Gogh, Vincent 143
Van Norman H.A. (Claude) 83, 318, 324, 350, 352, 353, 354 362, 368, 375
Vargas, Jose and Cecilia 126, 127
Vasquez, Lupe 277-279
Vernon, Cora 292
Von Stroheim, Erich 88, 90
Voreyer, Billy 55

Wade, Almira 165-167
Wade, Mr. and Mrs. Harry 165
Wagner, Gloria 73
Walker, Charlie 187
Walker, Pap 210, 296
Walsh, Henry (Ducky) 20, 36
Wanderer of the Wasteland 87
Warner, Mr. and Mrs. Jack 222, 369, 374
Water and Power (Kahrl) 306
Water Borders (Austin) 285
Watterson, Mark and Wilfred 306
Wayne, John 79
"Wedding of the Waters" 323-335
Weller, Sam 259
Wells, Farland (Doc) 203
Westmoreland, N.C. 197, 206
Westways 104, 289, 325, 363
Wheat, Carl 165
White, Col. John 58, 154, 294
White, Mrs. John Quincy 165, 166
Whitney Falls, CA 150, 254, 316
Whitney, Mt., CA 3,25,45-47, 51, 252, 262, 263, 265, 296, 315, 327, 330
Whitney Portal, CA 48, 57, 104, 316, 327, 352, 361, 364, 380
Wicht, Chris 135, 178, 179, 180,
Wide Margins (Putnam) 380
Wiggington, Jim 248
Wildrose, CA 97, 114, 151, 213, 215, 216, 267, 273
Williams, Fred 297
Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Ben 124
Winchell, Walter 367
Winkler, Frank 242, 243
Winston, Tom 215, 216
Winters, Aaron and Rosie 195
Wolff, John E. 201
Woodin, Dr. Irving (Doc) 248
Woodman, Billy 299, 301,
Woodman, Ruth Cornwall 57, 197, 293-296, 299-303, 373
Woodman, Winthrop 299
Worcester Evening Gazette 372
Worcester, MA 7-9, 11, 12, 21, 24, 31, 36, 372
Worcester Telegram 20, 372
Worth, Harry 87
WPA Guide to Death Valley 108, 292

Yermo, CA 26

Zabriskie, Chris 197
Zinc Hill, CA 175, 176, 177, 186, 254

If you enjoyed this book, give DESERT PADRE to your friends and family.

❑ Yes, I want _____ copies of DESERT PADRE at $19.95 each, plus $3.00 shipping per book (California residents add $1.55 state sales tax per book). Canadian orders must be accompanied by a postal money order in U.S. funds. Allow 15 days for delivery.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Credit Card #:_____Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

or call your credit card order to 1-888-859-6140 (toll free)

My check or money order for $_____ is enclosed or charge my ❑ Visa or ❑ MasterCard.

	Qty.	Unit Price	Total Price
Desert Padre		19.95	
Shipping		3.00	
Calif. sales tax			
TOTAL:			

Please make your check payable to:
Mesquite Press
P.O. Box 1304
Desert Hot Springs, CA 92240

MESQUITE PRESS

Biography/American History

An Inspirational Account of One Man's Devotion to God and His Fellow Americans

Relive one man's dedication and determination to increase the quality of life for residents in east/central California from the early 1900s through the Depression years. You'll meet and fall in love with Father John J. Crowley—a monumental man in his devotion and faith in God, his determination to fight for causes that would better the common man, and his vivacious attitude toward life.

Until now, the story of one of the California desert's most dominant figures of the early twentieth century was fated to slip into anonymity. Here you'll discover his devotion to the spiritual and economic welfare of the people in the Owens Valley and Death Valley regions through vignettes told by his parishioners, friends, and relatives. Many of Father Crowley's weekly "Sage and Tumbleweed" columns enrich this historical account by glimpsing into his thoughts and actions.

This intriguing biography will engage historians, people of all faiths, and lovers of true literary prose. It will revive your spiritual and community allegiance while entertaining you with the story of a real man among men. *Desert Padre* brings Father Crowley's legend back to life and into your heart.

MESQUITE PRESS

$19.95

Joan Brooks felt passionately about retelling Father John J. Crowley's legacy in a comprehensive biography. She discovered his devotion and deeds for Californians through monuments named in his honor, subsequent research in east/central California museums, and speaking with relatives, friends, and parishioners. Besides a lover of history, she has also published and edited *American Desert* magazine. Brooks and her husband live in the southern California desert area where she is an active member of several historical societies and museums.

SAGE and TUMBLEWEED
By INYOKEL
SOME FACTS ABOUT THE TOP OF THE UNITED STATES, MT. WHITNEY, AND THE BOTTOM, DEATH VALLEY—AND WHAT LIES IN BETWEEN!
Box 74-A
Lone Pine-Inyo County
California

ISBN 0-9656521-4-9

EAN

9 780965 652148 51995